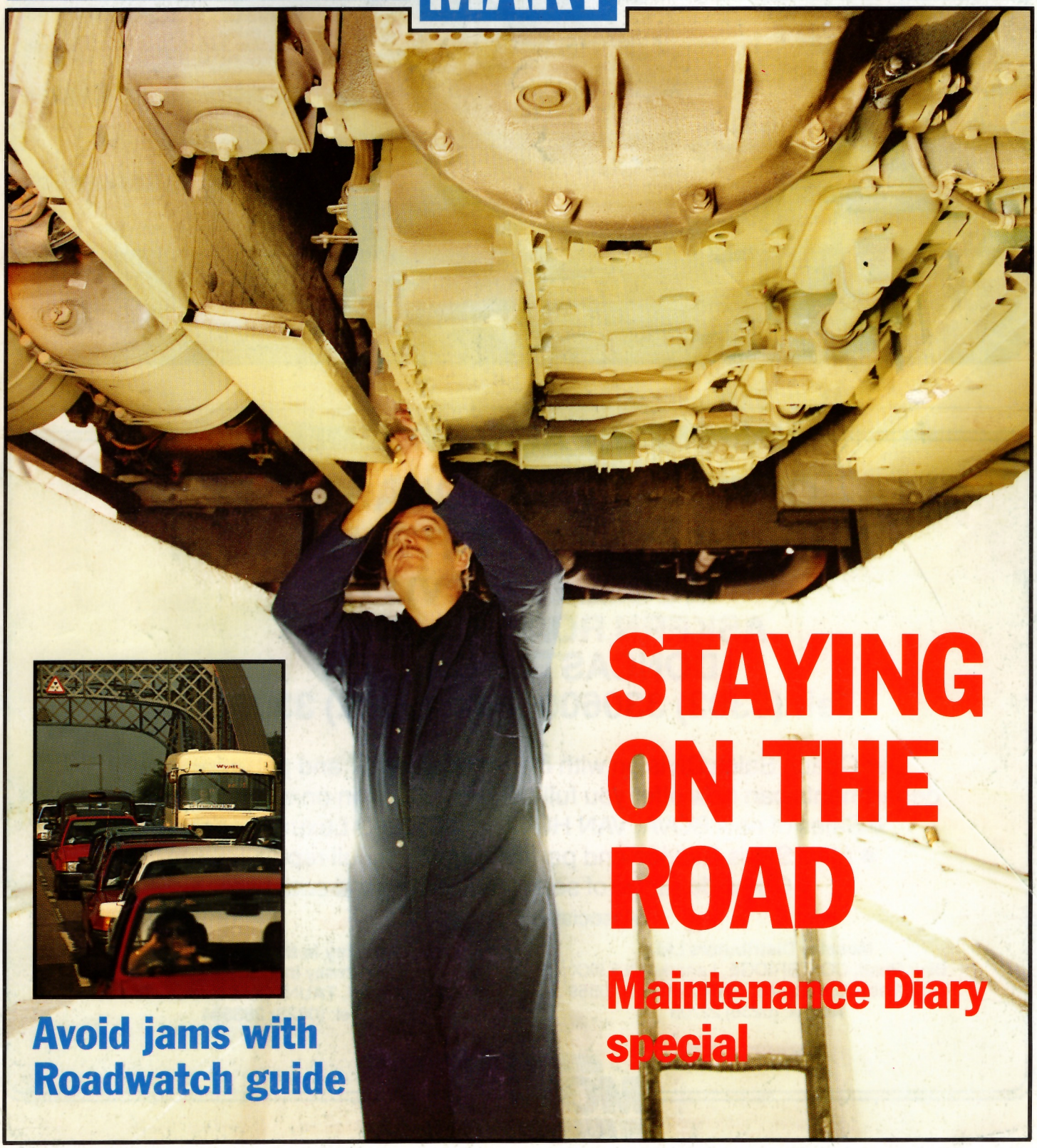
COACH MART

The weekly for the coach industry

Issue 663 £1

October 31st, 1991



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AEC

1977 Plaxton Express, 53 seater, semi-auto gearbox, Bristol Dome, white/black exterior, autumn tint moquette. MoT 03.10.91. Stock No. 0006.

VOLVO

1983 B10M Jonckheere P599, 48 seats, 6 speed gearbox, curtains, toilet, drinnks machine, MoT 29.11.91. Stock No. R037.
1983 Volvo B10M 12 metre, 57 seater, Duple Laser, PA/radio/cassette, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, MoT 15.07.92. Stock No. 1074.
1980 B58 Air/Leaf Dominant, 12 metre, 53 seats, 48 recliners, 5 fixed, automat g/b, power door, tinted windows, curtains, side lockers, MoT 17.12.91. Stock No. 0012.
1973 B58 Plaxton Supreme, 11 metre, 53 (remoquetted) seats, X'Press doors, side lockers, MoT 03.10.91. Stock No. 1047.

BEDFORD

1980 PJK, 29 seat, Duple Dom, Stock No. 0007.
1975 YRQ Plaxton, 45 seats, power door, side lockers, private plates, Stock No. 1062.

LEYLAND

1982 Duple Dominant, 51 reclining seats, 6 spd gearbox, side lockers, MoT 21.01.92. Stock No. 9033.
1981 Plaxton, 53 seats, 5 spd split gearbox, autumn tint moquette, side lockers, MoT 13.06.92. Stock No. 1073.
1981 Leopard Duple Dominant, 53 seats, 6 speed ZF g/box, red moq, livery white. Stock No. M9012.
1981 Leopard Plaxton Supreme, 12 metre, 49 recliners, 6 speed ZF gearbox, cream interior, autumn tint moquette. MoT 25.10.91. Stock No. 9011.
1980 Leopard Plaxton Supreme, 11 metre, 53 (remoquetted) seats, X'Press doors, 6 speed ZF gearbox, side lockers. Stock No. 9009.

SCANIA

1986 K112 Plaxton 3500, 55 reclining seats, demountable toilet, double glazed, retarder, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, MoT 01.03.92. Stock Number 1063.

CUMMINS

1985 Duple 425 (Cummins), 6 speed automatic g/box. 54 recliners, curtains, radio/PA, toilet, drinks machine, TV monitors, continental door, courier seat.

SETRA

1987 S215 HR (Rational) Mercedes, V8 engine, 6 speed ZF gearbox, Voith retarder, 47 recliners, toilet, drinks, fridge, TV, Webasto, curtains, MoT 9.6.92. Stock No. 1072.

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MOSELEY

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How to avoid maintenance problems and help the industry.

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COMMENT

COACHMART expressed the hope that Coach & Bus '91 had provided the industry with a much-needed boost and that operators were actually considering investment in new vehicles.

It is still early days yet, but the general mood of optimism which swept through Hall Five at Birmingham's NEC three weeks ago continues to pervade the industry.

A straw poll of manufacturers and dealers in this week's issue (see page nine) adds weight to the argument that both operators and the beleagured manufacturers are beginning to see chinks of light at the end of the tunnel.

It's easy to talk about investing in dazzling new vehicles when they are bewitching you on a glittering show stand, but the proof of the pudding comes when you go back to the yard and assess the cost of investment in the cold light of day.

However, it appears that most operators were not indulging in 'show talk', but were genuinely interested in the products on offer. Exhibitors at Coach & Bus have been busy sending out quotes as coach operators follow up their initial enquiries.

The general opinion seems to be that many of those enquiries will eventually end up as sales. Now that's got to be great news.

ON A more serious note, it is sad to report on the behaviour of a small minority of coach operators on the *Coachmart* trip to the European Coach & Bus Show in Kortrijk, Belgium.

Coachmart organised the trip so that operators could overcome the inconvenience of the two major shows overlapping. And with kind sponsorship from P&O Ferries, Jonckheere in Belgium and Midland United Transport we were able to offer a package of unrepeatable value.

However that generosity was seriously abused by a small minority who turned the trip into an excuse for two days of drunkeness. No wonder Brits abroad have such a poor reputation when even those who are charged with the responsibility of taking holidaymakers abroad don't know how to behave themselves.

Sadly, it is the actions of the few which spoil it for the rest. That certainly was the case in Kortrijk.

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■EXPRESS SERVICES

Knightrider starts low-cost London-Scotland service

NATIONAL Express and Scottish Citylink were this week considering their responses to an attack on their highly lucrative express services between London and Scotland.

A new company, Knightrider Travel, has announced plans to start a new low-cost day and night service. The Shotts-based firm goes into operation this week offering a service which will operate principally from Edinburgh and Glasgow, but also pick up at Livingston, Bathgate, Cumbernauld, Airdrie, Coatbridge and Hamilton. The fare is being set at £8 single and £15 return.

National Express public relations officer, Stuart Render, described the move as a 'retrograde step for the industry.'

He told *Coachmart:* 'We have been in a price war before and we will look to see if it is necessary for us to compete.

'They are going back to the old days and I regret that they are not competing on quality. The quality aspect is an important part of our business and we feel that our customers appreciate the services - including the provision of hostesses - which we offer.'

Knightrider: to operate day and night service.

A spokesman for Scottish Citylink confirmed that it will be responding to the Knightrider fare and revealed that the company was busy re-branding its Londonliner service - the cheaper end of its Glasgow/Edinburgh-London express work.

The men behind Knightrider are accountants Donald Shankland and Robert Williams.

Mr Shankland revealed that Knightrider would be using four coaches - Volvo B10Ms with Duple, Plaxton and Van Hool bodywork - to operate the regular daytime and overnight coach services.

They will run into King's Cross and involve an eight hour 45 minute journey - including a 45-minute refreshment stop on the way.

Mr Shankland told *Coachmart* that his company was aiming to attract the lower end of the market with its 'no frills' service.

He said: 'We believe that it will appeal to local communities in central Scotland because they won't have to travel in to Edinburgh or Glasgow to catch the coach. We are picking up in the towns where people live.'

■LICENSING

Vehicle Inspectorate HQ goes high-tech

A NEW £500,000 computer has been installed by the Vehicle Inspectorate at its Bristol headquarters to build up a picture of vehicle prohibitions on all UK and foreign coaches and buses.

From the start of November records of all prohibitions will be computerised to create a detailed and comprehensive database showing when and to which vehicle and operator and for what reason the prohibition was issued.

And by March next year the system will be expanded to capture details of all satisfactory inspections undertaken so that the VI will be able to build up a picture of all operators whose vehicles are satisfactory. For each operator, it will be able to compare the number of prohibitions issued against the number of vehicles inspected.

The VI says this will help it assess operators' maintenance arrangements and identify those who have fallen below the accepted standard. Local managers would then be able to use the information to provide better advice to the traffic commissioners and licensing authorities.

The system is likely to be expanded to include prohibitions to light goods vehicles, private cars and motorbikes and for overloading and drivers' hours offences. At the moment it just applies to PSVs, HGVs and trailers.

Julian David, deputy chief executive of the VI, said: 'This is a significant investment and means a closer eye can be kept on those operators whose safety record has not been as good as it should be.'

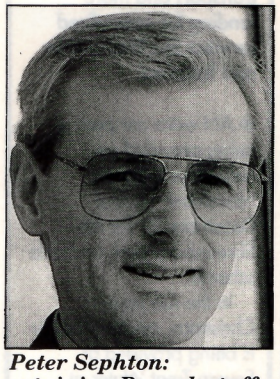
■TAKEOVER

SYT buys Beenak

SOUTH Yorkshire Transport, which is the subject of an investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission following its acquisition of SUT/Sheafline, has taken over another local bus operator.

The company this week confirmed that an agreement had been reached to acquire Beenak Ltd, trading as Don Valley Bus Services and formerly Skills of Nottingham, for an undisclosed sum.

SYT's chairman and managing director, Peter Sephton, said: 'Acquisitions by the company are sensitive in view of the present judicial appeal being pursued by the MMC. However, Beenak is a very small operator and its market share will not significantly distort trading in Sheffield. Until such a time as the legal process has been exhausted, the company will remain separate from SYT.'



Peter Sephton: retaining Beenak staff.

Beenak operates 10 tendered and commercial bus services in the Sheffield area from its Petre Street premises. It has an operating licence for 14 vehicles and 23 staff who will be retained by SYT.

BRIEFS

● **AFTER only two years with the company, Roger Edwards has been promoted to commercial director of Webasto Thermosystems of Doncaster Carr, South Yorkshire.**

Mr Edwards joined the bus and coach exhaust supplier two years ago as its special projects manager.

● PLANNING, transport and economics consultant, Colin Buchanan and Partners, has opened a new office in Manchester.

This adds to its already established bases in Bristol and Edinburgh.

The new office is headed by associate director, Robert Goldup, and is situated in Premier House, 22 Deansgate, Manchester.

● **A MERGER has taken place between the London Taxicard Users Association and the London Dial-a-Ride Users Association.**

The newly formed DaRT says it will be campaigning for much improved access to public transport and more funding for specialised services like Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard.

● AN extra car park is being provided on Saturdays between November 16 and December 21 for the Shrewsbury park and ride scheme.

In the run up to Christmas, another facility is being provided at Severn Trent Water at Shelton and buses will be operating every 15 minutes.

● **SHROPSHIRE Bus service 30, from Coalbrookdale to Telford town centre, has been put out for retender.**

The service is currently being operated by Shearings.

The successful company will be announced in two weeks time with the new service being run from November 24.

■COACH

Speedlink joins NatEx

AIRPORT coach specialist, Speedlink, was last Friday (October 25) transferred from owner Drawlane to the National Express Group.

Drawlane - which has a 20 percent stake in the National Express Group - has passed Speedlink over to NE to consolidate its coaching interest in one company.

'It had been in our minds at the outset that this move should take place,' said Ray McEnhill, Drawlane and National Express Group chairman.

'Both Drawlane and National Express will be concentrating their energies on the businesses they know best and therefore both companies, their staff and their customers will benefit.'

Mr McEnhill made no comment on the future of Crosville Wales - the bus company still under the NatEx umbrella and which last week transferred all its coaching interests to Amberline, a sister company.

'I am sure that this change will be to the benefit of Speedlink, which should gain from a closer working relationship with the National Express Group, and that the change should open up new opportunities for the company,' said Speedlink managing director, Nigel Gray.

Speedlink: runs 43 vehicles and employs 200 staff.

Speedlink runs 43 vehicles and employs 200 staff on contracts ranging from National Express diagrams to Virgin Atlantic and British Airways work for Stansted, Heathrow and Gatwick airports. It also provides dome chartered coaching.

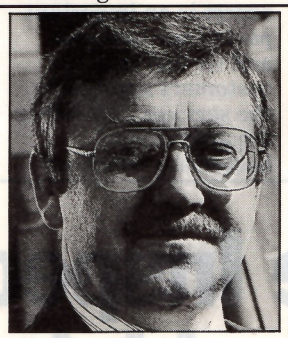
■PEOPLE

Charles Moseby moves from Reeve Burgess to Wright

CHARLES Moseby has moved from Reeve Burgess to Wright of Ballymena as sales manager for northern England and Wales.

Mr Moseby (44), who was in bus and coach sales for 11 years with the Plaxton Group subsidiary, will be based in Chesterfield and joins George Richards, who has been with the Ulster bus builder for the last 20 years and is responsible for sales in southern England.

More than 200 Wright bodies are now in service in London and last month the Northern Ireland company won a £1 million order for 40 Handybus bodies from Go-Ahead Northern of Gateshead.



Charles Moseby: new man at Wright.

■PEOPLE

Tayside finance chief mystery

MYSTERY surrounds the sudden departure of Tayside Public Transport finance director, Alec Pearson, from the newly privatised company.

Sandy Strachan, chairman and chief executive of the Dundee-based bus and coach operation, which was sold to its management in June, confirmed that Mr Pearson had left the company, but refused to elaborate further.

It is believed that Mr Pearson, who was finance controller of Tayside Regional Council's transport department before the firm went private in a £4 million management-employee buyout deal, left following a board meeting last week.

Last month it was announced that Tayside was to shed 25 workers.

It had already started talks between management and the union involved and it appeared that around 11 administrative staff were to go with the rest of the losses taken up by workshop personnel.

■OBITUARY

Peter Lemmon

A MAN who made the introduction of new vehicles to the UK more bearable, has died suddenly.

Peter Lemmon, who was chief certification officer for the East Midlands region, breathed an air of flexibility into certifying vehicles for initial fitness when he worked for the Vehicle Inspectorate, said one of his friends, Alan Wilson, of Alan Wilson PSV.

'He was a real pioneer because of his willingness to help manufacturers, his incredible knowledge and his ability,' said Mr Wilson.

'He really was the forerunner of a flexible approach to approving new designs of vehicles.'

Mr Lemmon, who is survived by his wife, Olive, and two sons, John and Alan, lived in Grantham.

He had retired only three months ago, but fell victim to a suspected heart attack and was buried last week in Newark.

■COACH

Major changes at Jonckheere

Jonckheere: made £9 million capital available.

BELGIAN coach building giant, Jonckheere has undergone another major shake up and made £9 million of capital available for investment.

The company, which exports 15 percent of its annual output of 600 vehicles to the UK, has been split into two divisions.

One will look exclusively after the bus and coach building interests of the firm, while the other will concentrate on supplying parts to the construction industry.

News of the latest developments at Jonckheere follow the resignation of key figure and family shareholder, Patrick Jonckheere, as general manager earlier this year (*Coachmart*, March 7) amid rumours of a major difference of opinion between Patrick and his father, Henri.

At the time Jonckheere had reported its first ever loss and resignations within the company's top management team.

Jonckheere, which also supplies vehicles to the Benelux countries, France, Scandinavia, Spain and Bermuda, has already sold its affiliated Belgian company, Sadef, to Austrian group, Voest-Alpine.

Patrick Jonckheere is believed to have been put in charge of sales, marketing and strategic planning of the bus and coach division, while Noel Heethem is expected to head up the new company as general manager from December 1.

Chairman of the group, which is based in Roselare, is Henri Jonckheere.

Despite rumours of interest from United Bus and other concerns, the Belgian company is said to be determined to remain independent and the latest changes are seen as a means of strengthening it.

Despite repeated attempts by *Coachmart* to obtain confirmation of the changes at Jonckheere no reply was forthcoming from the company at the time of going to press.

■PEOPLE

Gavin hits the heights

GAVIN Fraser Booth - a public transport officer in Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive's planning and marketing department - has enjoyed stunning success in this year's Chartered Institute of Transport examinations.

The 26-year-old qualified for full membership of the institute as well as picking up the Bus & Coach Council prize for the highest mark obtained in the Road Transport paper. The exam was sat by 110 candidates from all over the world.

Mr Booth was presented with his prize by HRH The Princess Royal at the CIT Prizewinners' ceremony in London earlier this month.

From Milngavie, Mr Booth graduated with a Bsc at Glasgow University and went on to work for Grampian Regional Transport and Western Scottish Omnibuses before joining Strathclyde PTE last year.

■BUS SALES

Solent breaks the £1m barrier

SOUTH coast operator, Solent Blue Line, has taken its investment in new buses over the last 12 months to over £1 million, following the delivery of six new Leyland Olympian double-deckers.

The vehicles, which cost a total of £612,000, have been introduced to the 90-vehicle fleet in response to strong demand at peak travel times.

■IN COURT

London Forest: accountant on fraud charges.

Accountant due in court

A FORMER financial accountant at disbanded London Buses subsidiary, London Forest Travel, is to appear in court next month on charges of theft, deception and forgery involving around £35,000. David Charles Clarke (36), of Greenshaw, Brentwood, Essex, is to appear at Waltham Forest magistrates court on Monday, November 11.

London Forest was disbanded in September following a month of strike action, police investigations into alleged fraud and the unconnected resignation of MD, Tom Young.

■BRIEFS

● THE Association of Metropolitan Authorities has called on the Government to give councils £15 million to get identified bus priority schemes - selected by local authorities around the country - off the ground.

The AMA's highways committee chairman, Steve Nugent, said: 'Authorities have identified a number of areas which will benefit from priority measures - now all we need is the funding.'

● 'BUSES, the environment, 1992 and beyond' is to be the theme for the 17th annual Bus & Coach Council, Scotland Conference.

The event will take place at the Gleneagles Hotel, Tayside, from Monday, April 13 to Thursday, April 16, 1992.

● BJERN G Larsson has been appointed president of Volvo Bus Corporation.

He is responsible for global sales of approximately 5,000 buses a year in 40 countries.

Mr Larsson, who was previously president of Volvo Truck Parts Corporation, is a former managing director of Swedish bus body builder, Saffle.

● AUTOMOTIVE marketing consultants, Phil Heighway and John Broadley, have become authorised consultants for the Department of Trade and Industry Marketing Initiative - a scheme whereby the DTI subsidises consultancy work carried out by their recognised consultants for businesses seeking marketing advice.

● MERSEYTRAVEL, the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority and Executive, reduced its bus services costs in 1990/91 from £10.2 million to £9.4 million, according to its annual report.

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E (88) BEDFORD MIDI, 15 seater, diesel, LWB, hi-top, good condition, side door ..... **£5,995 + VAT**

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UNREGISTERED MERCEDES 814D chassis cowl, suitable for 21/26 seat coach body.

1990 (G) MERCEDES 308 MELLOR, luxury 12 high backed seat conversion, 11,000 miles, white.

1988/89 (F) DAF SBR 2000 ATI PLAXTON DOUBLE DECK, 74 seat and courier coach, WC, servery, wired for video, 44,200kms.

1987/88 (E) VOLVO B10M DUPLE 340, 53 reclining seat coach, rear WC.

1986 (D) BEDFORD YNT PLAXTON PARAMOUNT, 53 seat coach, MoT 24.4.92, 24,500kms.

1986 (C) BEDFORD YNT PLAXTON PARAMOUNT, 53 seat coach, recon engine.

1986 (C) MCW METROLINER DOUBLE DECK, 72 seat coach, full Rapide spec.

1984 BEDFORD PLAXTON PARAMOUNT, 35 seat coach.

1983 VOLVO B10M DUPLE LASER 1, 51 seat coach, air suspension.

1983 LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE LASER 1, 48 seat coach, MoT 25.3.92.

2 X 1983 BEDFORD PJK PLAXTON, 29 seat coach, c/w electric/hydraulic Ratcliffe chair lift.

1982 MAN SR280 EXECUTIVE, 46 seat coach, WC, servery, wired for video, air suspension, MoT March 1992.

1982 LEYLAND TIGER PADANE ZX, 47 seat Executive coach, air conditioning, WC, drinks machine, MoT March 1992.

3 x 1981 BEDFORD PJK PLAXTON, 29 seat coach, c/w electric/hydraulic chair lift.

1979 (T) BEDFORD YMT DUPLE, 53 seat coach, MoT 20.6.92.

1979 (T) AEC RELIANCE DUPLE DOMINANT II, 53 seat coach, dual purpose, MoT 11.2.92.

1978 FORD 1114 PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seat coach, MoT April 1992.

1976 AEC RELIANCE 760 DUPLE COACH, MoT 10.4.92.

1987 (D) FREIGHT ROVER 350 DIESEL DORMOBILE, 16 seat bus.

1959 AEC ROUTEMASTER, 64 seat d/d bus, MoT April '92.

STOP PRESS

1988 (F) MERCEDES 609D, 26 moquette seats, tinted windows, full coach spec, 12 months MoT.

1988 (E) FREIGHT ROVER SHERPA, 16 seat PSV, standard factory spec, MoT 8.8.92.

1981 (X) VOLVO B58 PLAXTON, 53 seat coach, MoT May 1992.

1977 (R) LEYLAND FLEETLINE B20, double deck bus, 68 seats, Park Royal body, Iveco engine, no MoT.

Many more entries expected and further entries welcomed. For details contact Derek Bolt, Paul Clay or Stephen Holt.

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*NB: All potential buyers will need to register at the Heavy Commercial reception and obtain a buyer's number PRIOR to bidding please. Non ADT account card holders are required to lodge **£500 CASH** or a **BANKERS DRAFT** (in favour of ADT Auctions Ltd) deposit in order to obtain a buyer's number.*

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■SALES

Show could herald a climb from recession

OPTIMISM and orders may mark an upturn in the coach industry say manufacturers in the aftermath of a successful Coach & Bus '91 show.

Just a fortnight after the NEC event, body and chassis builders have checked their order books and concluded that 1992 could provide the tonic the industry needs to drag it out of the doldrums.

'Without exception, this was Kassbohrer's best show ever,' said Kassbohrer UK managing director, Jim Shuttleworth.

'There has been an amazing change in optimism in the latter part of the year. As a direct result of the show, we sold our remaining four 215 Tornados and got a commitment for 15 new vehicles worth £2.1 million.'

Mr Shuttleworth said two factors had brought the change for Setra.

The first was the optimism brought by the hope of economic recovery and the second is improvement in overseas' incoming tourism.

'But the Kassbohrer product is no longer as expensive, in relative terms, as it was,' he said.

Stabilised exchange rates thanks to the ERM and other factors had brought down price differentials, he said, showing the Setra to give good value for money.

Plaxton's order book for Premiere and Excalibur bodies - launched at the show - was expected to top the 200 mark as operator enquiries were converted into customers, including the 101 bodies ordered by Shearings and Wallace Arnold.

New orders include two Premieres on Scania from Shaws of Coventry, and one for Perry's of Slingsby.

'Most operators liked the concept and we will take account of detail criticism in developing the final specification, colours and options list for the coming season,' said sales director, Clive Hodgson.

Stuart Johnson said it was too early for euphoria but high time for confidence.

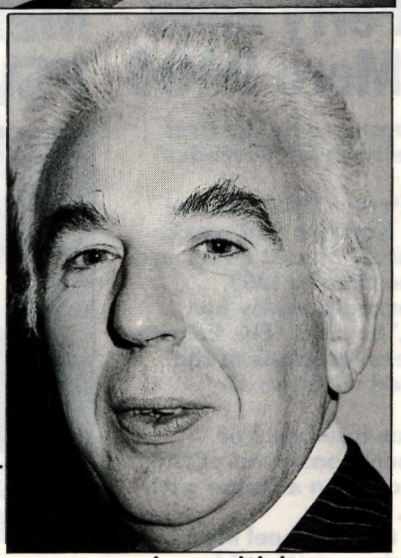
'It was a good show for Scania,' he said. 'But I just hope it's not a false dawn.

'It's fair to say we saw more interest in coach buying than we have for two years. You've got to bear in mind that many orders announced at the show were business generated much earlier.

'There's no room for euphoria. What we all need now is consistency so we can plan a stable trading environment.'

Berkhof's man in the UK, David Waterman, said operators who had postponed buying

Above: Coach & Bus '91 show gave companies some optimism.



Right: Stuart Johnson - it is high time for confidence in the industry.

were finally seeing the prospect of a profitable 1992... and placing orders to match.

'The follow-up has been incredible. The optimism engendered by the show is still there,' said Mr Waterman, sales and marketing director.

'People asking for quotes still want them - it was not just easy talk at the show. From the people I have spoken to, holiday tour bookings seem to have picked up and many operators are predicting a very good 1992.'

Caetano's Alan Page said the Algarve II prototype was well received, and the Portuguese manufacturer would be swinging into action to make changes suggested by operators.

'There were some minor criticisms, and they were very welcome. That's why the prototype was there,' he said.

In all, Caetano sold 11 coaches as a direct result of the show - three B6R-chassis 35-seaters and eight Algarve Mk I vehicles. Other orders were expected.

'We were thrilled by the response. The success story of the year is likely to be the B6R midi chassis, which brought a very positive reaction.'

Volvo Bus was also pleased with the B6R's impact: 'The Volvo stand was overwhelmed on the Friday,' said a spokesman.

■COACH

Transcity Link plans to keep on growing

ACQUISITION-hungry Transcity Link has snapped up another coach company and announced its intention of making more purchases.

The Sidcup, Kent, bus and coach company has followed up the recent takeovers of Brian Jones Coaches and P & H Coaches by buying up the business of Granta Travel of Sevenoaks.

Granta ran three commuter services to London from Maidstone and Swanley, as well as European tour work with its seven high specification Bovas and LAGs.

Transcity is looking to integrate its excursion work in its new 'Treasures of Europe' tours operation.

Transcity director, Peter Hobcraft, told *Coachmart* that its new service would be concentrating on a package of short tours to destinations like the Rhineland and Switzerland.

He said: 'We see great potential for coaching holidays. People still want their holidays, but are spending less money on them.'

Transcity, which now has a fleet of 40 coaches and buses, has taken on the eight-strong Granta Travel workforce - including former owner, Chris Stock.

Mr Hobcraft confirmed that his company will actively pursue other coach firms.

He said: 'We see acquisition as the best way to expand.'

■TOURS

Name-change for Boyden

FORMER Boyden director and general manager, Tony Laver, has renamed the company he and his wife, Jean, bought from the receiver.

Laver Holidays replaces the Boyden Travel name for the 1992 season, which Mr Laver hopes will see an upturn in bookings - down 30 percent this year thanks to the Gulf War and the recession.

Mr Laver honoured £60,000-worth of holiday deposits which had gone into Boyden Travel when the parent Boyden Group went into receivership this summer. The deal involved 175 tours.

'Our seats sales have dropped by almost a third this year, but we expect to retrieve most of the lost business in 1992 with a strong programme,' Mr Laver told *Coachmart*.

'We will be helped by the phenomenal customer loyalty that we've witnessed since March.'

Laver Holidays, based at the Central Bus Station in Derby, has opted for contracting operators to supply vehicles and sticking to the tour side of the operation.

'It was quite a difficult transition to make,' said Mr Laver.

'The idea of no longer having anything to do with the vehicles took a while to sink in.

'Now I find I have no trouble finding good vehicles and good operators but making certain the drivers are up to standard is extremely difficult. Good drivers with a tour attitude are like hen's teeth.'

One operator which Laver Holidays uses - Colins Coaches of Shepshed - is supplying a Bova in Laver Holidays livery for regular work, and Mr Laver says he feels that is the way ahead.

■COACH SALES

The King's Ferry aims to get first Merc 0404

THE King's Ferry is hoping to be the first UK operator to take delivery of Mercedes' new 0404.

Managing director, Peter O'Neill, drove the 381 bhp version at Kortrijk and was so impressed he immediately placed a forward order for delivery some time in 1993.

'What a machine! Mercedes really has thought of everything,' he said. 'The heating is controllable for several sections of the saloon, and is integrated with the air conditioning.

'There were some nice touches. For instance, the spare wheel comes out of the front of the coach attached to a frame with its own trolley wheels.

'It can be offered up to the wheel studs without the fitter or driver getting his hands dirty.'

Mr O'Neill said he'd possibly be going for a mid-range specification but would upgrade that to a 'Royal Class' vehicle if the market, as he hoped, improves for top-quality vehicles.

'The visit convinced me that the UK has got some catching up to do. The Europeans normally have a better class of coach. We're very old-fashioned.

'The moquette on my vehicle at Coach & Bus '91 raised a few eyebrows but at Kortrijk, no-one would have noticed it. Designers there were much bolder,' he told *Coachmart*.

He said he expected a price tag of around £165,000 for his 0404: 'But that is extremely good value. Even the driver's bunk was like a hotel,' he commented.

■MAINTENANCE

Merseyside sets up PSV repair business

Peter Coombes (left), managing director of Merseyside Transport, plans the growth of the new MTL Engineering business with general manager, James Beveridge..

MERSEYSIDE Transport has managed to avoid closing its giant bus works in Liverpool by launching a new business to repair and refurbish PSVs.

The Edge Lane site, which ceased as a bus depot and maintenance works in July when Merseybus operations were transferred to Garston and Green Lane, faced closure before the launch of MTL Engineering.

It will carry out every type of work needed to keep PSVs on the road - from renovation of mechanical and electrical components to the complete rebuilding of double-deckers.

The company has already secured a £1 million order to refurbish 300 MCW Metrobuses for London Buses. James Beveridge is general manager of the Merseyside Transport subsidiary.

■PEOPLE

Jim Moffat named Fife Scottish MD

THE man who unsuccessfully spearheaded the bitter fight to prevent the Stagecoach Holdings Group gaining control of Fife Scottish has been appointed managing director of the company.

Former Fife finance director and deputy managing director, Jim Moffat, was one of the driving forces behind a management-employee bid to buy the company in the Scottish Transport Group sell-off and challenged the sale to Brian Souter's bus and coach empire in the High Court (*Coachmart*, July 11).

Despite the MEBO's failure to overturn the sale, it seems that there are no hard feelings.

Group chairman, Brian Souter, said: 'I am delighted to confirm Jim's appointment which completes the senior management team at Fife following the appointment of Ken Smart as operations manager and Sandy Brydon's confirmation as engineering director.'

Mr Moffat was previously company secretary at Fife for nine years before he became general manager at then fellow Scottish Bus Group subsidiary, Highland Scottish, in 1987.

He returned to Fife last year and formed part of the team which fought the SBG and Scottish Secretary through the courts in the run up to privatisation.

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You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...

Hanmers selects a Dennis Javelin

HANMERS Coaches, of Wrexham, has taken delivery of one of the last remaining stock Dennis Javelins from Yeates Bus & Coach, the Volvo owned dealership in Loughborough.

The Javelin dealership has now moved from Yeates to neighbouring DSB Sales, of Long Whatton.

Yeates is seeking to clear its yard of unregistered vehicles by offering its 'sale of the decade' - with prices from only £70,000 on 8.5-metre and 12-metre coaches with either Duple or Plaxton bodywork. Some have low driver.

Hanmers' new coach is a 12-metre Plaxton Paramount 3200, fitted with 53 reclining seats, courier seat, and radio/PA/cassette. It is the third Javelin for the seven-vehicle operation.

Left: Owner Herbert Hanmer with his new Javelin.

Chester City Transport celebrate some firsts

FIVE Reeve Burgess Pointers are now in service with Chester City Transport. They are the first Reeve Burgess bodies in the 85-strong fleet - its first Dennis Darts and its first new buses for 15 years.

The new buses are being used on a variety of routes in and around the historic city.

David Clark, managing director of Chester City Transport, said: 'We have a number of services which are too busy for minibuses, but do not carry heavy enough peak loads to justify full-size vehicle.

'We are now running the Pointers on duties of this type to evaluate how they cope and how they are received by our customers. Initial reaction has been first class.'

The Chester Pointers are 35-seaters, with room for up to 15 standing passengers. A luggage pen is provided alongside the entrance. The interior soft trim is a warm dark red to match the moquette and Chester's Victoria red and cream colour scheme.

'Before ordering the Pointers we considered the alternatives which were available to us,' said Mr Clark. 'We were impressed with the Pointer's wide entrance and the obvious thought which had gone into minimising body maintenance and simplifying repair.'

The Pointer has an aluminium frame and its features include gasket mounted glazing and easily replaceable skirt and corner panels.

Deltas join park and ride service

THREE Optare Delta citybuses were recently delivered to East Kent Road Car Company for a park and ride contracted service in Canterbury. The Deltas are finished in a special blue and white livery for Canterbury City Council.

Park and ride services have been run on Saturdays in the past in Canterbury. After the weekend services proved to be very popular the council elected to try its first week-day scheme.

The Optare Delta is based on the DAF Bus SB220 underframe, which features a fully automatic four speed transmission with integral retarder, air suspension, power assisted steering, and an 11.6 litre turbo-charged low emission diesel engine.

The advanced Alusuisse aluminium alloy body system used on the Delta is proven in Europe and has numerous beneficial aspects for the operator. Its bolt together modular construction makes it far easier to repair than most conventionally built vehicles.

You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...

Soul Brothers still sticking with secondhand vehicles

GOOD quality secondhand coaches have been purchased by Soul Brothers Coaches, of Buckinghamshire, since the demise of Bedford.

The latest are a trio of former Wallace Arnold Volvo B10M GLs from Kirkby Coach & Bus in Anston.

Two of the three have Plaxton Paramount 3500, whereas the third has 3200 low driver. They replace older Bedfords, but not the oldest coach in the fleet - a Bedford VAM with original H plate.

Each has 50 reclining seats, rear continental door, double-glazing, curtains, Telma and under-floor lockers.

Soul Brothers has resisted buying new fleet replacements for the last five years. Kevin Lyne, general manager, told *Coachmart:* 'I don't see that middle-of-the-road operators can justify new vehicles.

'We bought five ex-Shearings Volvos three years ago, and for the sort of work we do they are ideal.'

Although these Duple-bodied vehicles have covered around 250,000 km on the company's contract and private hire work, Mr Lyne says running costs have been favourable.

The most expensive repair has been one piston on an engine and two £500 oil coolers.

There are 42 vehicles in the Olney-based Soul Brothers' fleet.

Dixons gets 16-seater

DIXONS Coaches, of Stockport, has taken a 16-seat PSV minicoach based on Leyland DAF 400 series with a diesel engine. The van conversion is by Made-to-Measure Minicoaches.

The vehicle interior is in red/grey and the specification includes seating by Kustombuilt. Hardwearing Armourflex floor covering, and soft trim interior colour coded to the seats, completes the passenger saloon.

The vehicle joins Dixon's fleet of M-2-M conversions on contract work and private hire.

MAN reaches a milestone

MAN has delivered 1,000 of its rear-engined midi-chassis since its launch just over three years ago - a measure of the size of the European midi-bus/coach market targeted by Volvo's new B6R.

One of the most recent is a Goppel-bodied 26-seat coach on 8.5-metre air suspension chassis powered by 190 bhp engine.

While the 1,000th 11.190 HOCL chassis is fitted with Beulas bodywork for a Spanish operator in Alicante, the Kortrijk show featured several MAN 'midis', including a Jonckheere-bodied nine-metre coach.

At a ceremony at the Belgian event, the 5,000th MAN engine for use in Van Hool vehicles was formally handed over to the Belgian manufacturer.

Almost 700 Van Hool buses and coaches a year are fitted with MAN engines and the most recent additions to the bus range - A300 and A500 - also use the German-built power units of 217 and 245 bhp in a side mounted location.

The 5,000th 'milestone' engine is a D 2866 LOH 6 12 litre unit of 420 bhp for a Van Hool complete coach.

MAN: 1,000th delivery of rear-engined midi-chassis since launch three years ago.

MILEAGE I$ MONEY.

New G391, the extra mileage truck tyre.

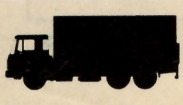
- **Higher Mileage**
- **Extra Safety**
- **Increased Retreadability**

The new G391 truck tyre benefits from all the experience Goodyear gained in developing the Flexomatic tread. You can benefit too.

In many tests, the new G391 has improved mileage by more than 15%*. Its deeper non-skid tread depth, combined with the new four belt construction, providing a major breakthrough in higher mileage. Add Goodyear's reputation for retreadability and superb control in the wet, and you've an unbeatable package – more mileage, more safety and more profit.

How's that for a long-distance investment?

*COMPARED TO ITS PREDECESSOR.



GOODYEAR

ENGINEERED BEYOND EXPECTATION.

HIGH STANDARD OF VEHICLES WILL BOOST INDUSTRY

No matter how much the industry tightens its belt, the Vehicle Inspectorate will not allow you to skimp on maintenance. Mike Morgan looks at the different ways coach operators keep on top of the job.

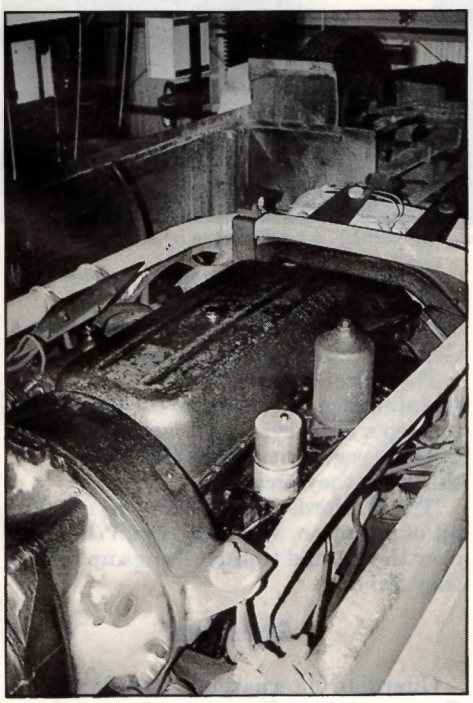
THE combined might of annual testing, together with the threat of spot checks at operators premises or on the roadside, are sufficient to keep maintenance a top priority. However, passenger safety and vehicle reliability are never far from the surface.

Let us not kid ourselves, coaches are very high-profile business tools. Joe Public judges the service by what is clearly visible everytime a driver is sent out on a job. It doesn't matter if it's a school run or a trans-continental safari. The condition of the vehicle and the name of the operator is there for all to see.

Pools of oil in the coach park and clouds of exhaust smoke are bad news for the image of coaching.

A smart vehicle with straight panels and a trouble-free motor are essential, not only for your business, but for every other coach operator in the country. Just think of the damage done to your business when your potential customers see a broken down coach - it doesn't matter if it's not one of yours because it's the image of the industry as a whole that is tarnished.

A situation to avoid: make sure you don't become a maintenance victim.



Oil leaks: a sure sign of poor maintenance.

Take a look at some of the horror stories hiding at the back of some operators' yards - not always out of service.

No operator can afford to put his, or her, name to a coach with defects - damaged door seals, cracked floor, ill-fitting floor traps, loose or dirty carpets, or leaking boot. Your customers will be the first to complain. But compromise their safety and the consequences could be catastrophic.

We all like to be associated with the high-gloss/high-spec coaching image, but examples of neglect can be found. They are not representative of the industry as whole, and a sensible maintenance programme should stop the 'cowboy' fraternity. Those who fail to keep to the planned schedule of inspections and services will lose their right to operate.

Given that you've got to do it, and do it right, then there's the inevitable question of cost. It's not just the big things like a new engine than can set you back over £7,000, it's the once moderately priced ancillaries like alternators that are regularly coming in at around £3,000. Windscreens are into the four-figure price range. You know the list - just to think about it is enough to give you a headache. For some it's sufficient excuse to go and close the garage doors for good.

Sometimes the unexpected can catch you out. Would you be aware that a new tacho head does not imply a new six-year certificate? That might appear too obvious, yet to assume can put you in trouble. Innocence of the regulations is no defence.

Regular maintenance to a clearly defined schedule by properly qualified and motivated staff is the major part of your salvation. The rest is down to a healthy bank balance and being on top of the job.

It sounds easy, but how often do you read *Coachmart's* Licensing & Legal pages and find people who slipped-up. An appearance before the traffic court is clearly something to avoid.

New vehicles come with built-in reliability and warranty cover which means major jobs are covered. However, this still leaves the regular servicing that each operator is committed to on their O-licence application form.

So what is the best solution? Some do it all in-house, others sub-contract to specialist commercial workshops, while most find a compromise somewhere between the two. Finding the most efficient system for your operation needs a few moments thought. The way you do it may not be the best.

Coachmart's Maintenance Diary volunteers represent six varied options. So I turned to them to see how they organised their maintenance. ▶

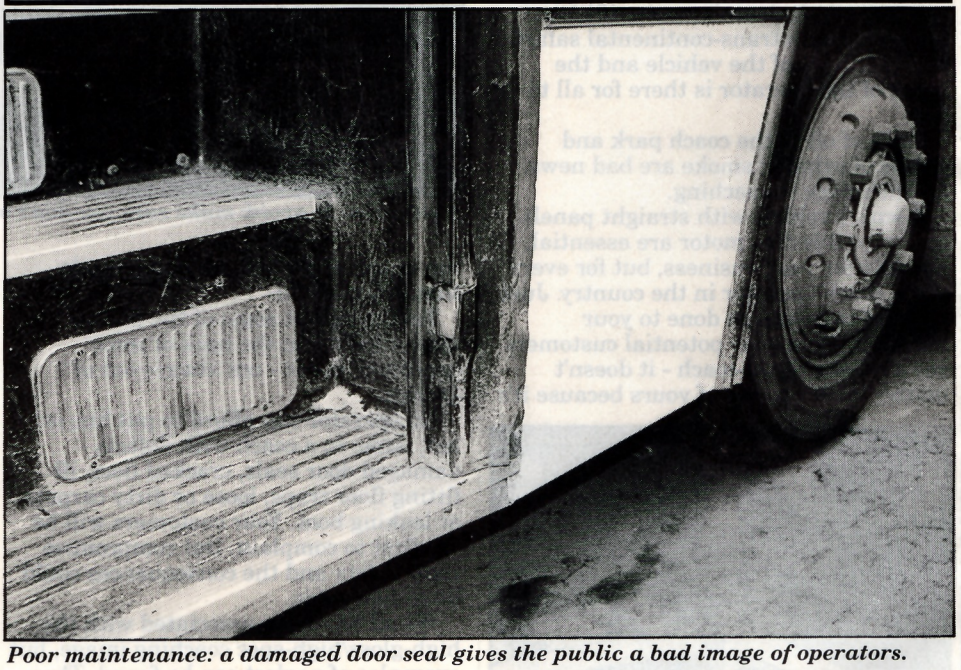
Regular maintenance will keep you out of Coachmart's Licensing & Legal pages.

THE VEHICLES IN THE LATEST MAINTENANCE DIARY SURVEY

Chassis	Body	Operator	Location
Volvo B58	Plaxton 3200	Allander Coaches	Milngavie
Leyland Leopard	Plaxton Supreme 3	Carmel Coach Travel	Okehampton
DAF MB200	Jonckheere Bermuda	Guardian International	Rugeley
Scania K113	Van Hool	Johnson Bros Tours	Worksop
Leyland DAF	400 Crystals	K Valley Coaches	Woking
Kassbohrer	Setra 215HD	Silver Coachlines	Edinburgh

FACTFILES

Operator	Fleet	Fitters	Maintenance facilities
Allander	22	4	Workshops with two pits
Carmel	10	2	New larger workshop with one pit
Guardian	4	0	Open yard behind filling station
Johnson	20	3	Covered workshop for four coaches
K Valley	4	0	None
Silver Coachlines	30	5	Own workshops



Poor maintenance: a damaged door seal gives the public a bad image of operators.

◀ MAINTENANCE DIARY SPECIAL

Allander

The workshop inventory of Allander Coaches includes a fork-lift truck. Plans for new buildings may not render this mobile engine and gearbox mover redundant because Allander has a nice side-line in reconditioned semi-automatic gearboxes.

The demise of Avon in central Scotland left a gap in the market and Allander plugged it.

A self-employed specialist overhauls 'boxes' at the Milngavie premises and keeps a good stock of units for supply to local operators.

Time honoured Scottish thrift is practiced. Parts from the Duple body on another Volvo B10M bought for rebodying are reclaimed to repair of other vehicles.

Mr Wilson said: 'It's already saved us over £300.'

As can be gauged by these entrepreneural activities, Allander is pretty well self-sufficient.

Managing director, Jim Wilson, only needs to call on ATS or Autoglass for outside help.

Carmel

Tony Hazell's Carmel Coach Travel business operates on the edge of Dartmoor where the need to be self sufficient was a strong motivation behind the construction of new workshops.

Said Tony: 'We replaced a glorified tin shed by literally constructing over the top and then demolishing the old building and retaining the pit. Now we have sufficient height for a high-liner and enough length for a 12-metre coach.'

Carmel does virtually everything in-house. For specialist jobs like tacho callibration there is no choice but to go outside, otherwise Mr Hazell says it's only gearboxes that present a problem - particularly the Eaton 452 as fitted by Bedford.

Remember: a broken down coach damages not only the operator concerned, but the image of the whole industry.

'We find that if we look in a gearbox and try a do-it-yourself repair, then the parts are expensive, and even if you repair the fault it is often cheaper to go for a reconditioned exchange unit.'

As with all coach operators, speed of repair is critical. Carmel uses Falco Transmissions at Ottery St Mary or The Gearbox Centre, of Bridgwater.

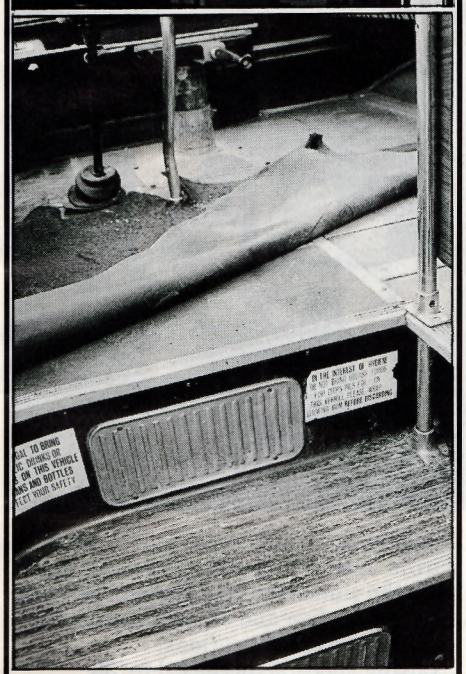
The secret of cost-effective maintenance, according to Mr Hazell, is to keep a close eye on the vehicles. 'Look at them regularly and do the little things as they occur.

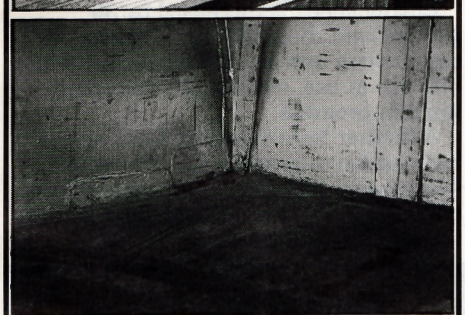
'The Bedfords in particular need a fair bit of attention. We have to pull them over the pit and tighten things up before they fall off.'

Guardian

Guardian International uses Chase Commercials or Greenhous for major repairs. Owner, Mike Scoins, does ▶

A CATALOGUE OF HORRORS





TELL-TALE SIGNS OF POOR MAINTENANCE

Top: A vehicle with serious bodywork neglect.
Centre: Loose and dirty carpets greet the passengers.
Bottom: A leaking boot.

◀ what he calls front-line servicing (filters, greasing, brake adjustment). Beyond that he refuses to do anything requiring a workshop.

However, he admits that the fleet has reached the point where commercial garage maintenance has become too expensive.

Mr Scoins explained: 'When you've got one coach you don't need your own facilities, but once you've got more than two you suddenly notice the amount of on-going maintenance.

'I know it would be cheaper to do it in-house, even if we had to use a mobile fitter at £15 an hour.

'Consequently, we are looking for our own secure yard with our own indoor facilities.'

Not that Mr Scoins is dissatisfied with the service from local specialists. 'We know the job's done properly. Anything major we don't touch because we do not have the paperwork to say we can do it - we won't compromise.

'Greenhous, the Leyland DAF agents, can't do enough for you. But they cost £25 an hour.'

K Valley

Frank Trotman, owner of K Valley Minibuses, contracts-out all maintenance to a local garage.

He said: 'Part of the problem is that I don't understand what goes on under the bonnet. Fair enough, we're talking about minibuses, but I've nothing to complain about.'

Mr Trotman is relieved of getting his hands dirty and can concentrate on management functions.

However, he admits that the choice of Mayford Motors came as a consequence of following a preferred mechanic.

Said Mr Trotman: 'I've used the same guy for years and when he moved to Mayford I followed him.

'I've had no problems with the coaches and I've had no problem with the ministry because we've passed the MoT every time.'

Johnson Bros

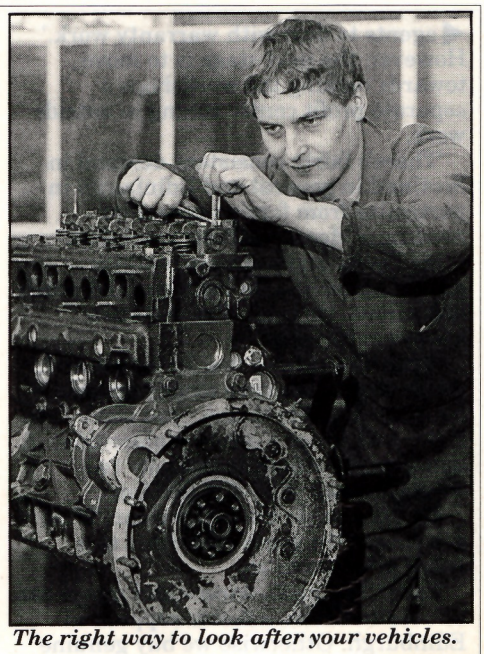
The very mention of the name 'Bedford' brought another strong justification for doing your own maintenance from Anthony Johnson. 'There's no point in waiting for repairs - you just keep them coming over the pits.'

Anthony is charged with responsibility for the Johnson family business in Worksop. He says: 'The only thing we don't touch is the gearbox.

'It's the Eaton five-speed box. Most of the time it's the third gear bearing that's gone, but we don't touch them. We've not been on a course or worked with someone who knows what he's doing.

'At least we can work on the engines in situe, although we sometimes bring in Rotherham Rebore - it has a mobile boring tool and they regrind crankshafts.'

Johnson's maintenance motto is 'look after the machine and it'll look after you'.



The right way to look after your vehicles.

According to Anthony, the biggest assets in the spacious workshop are two sets of mobile column lifts (the second set was snapped after the liquidation of Yorkshire Voyager in Leeds).

'They are our most useful tool, but we still need the pit for track rod ends and king pins.'

Buying new heavyweight coaches in recent years reduced any strain on maintenance resources by the Bedfords. 'We've been able to increase oil change periods to 10,000 kms and with the Volvos we can be virtually 100 percent certain that there's nothing wrong.'

Silver Coachlines

With 30 vehicles and an expanding Edinburgh Transport bus operation, Silver Coachlines has elected to go one further than simply doing everything in-house.

Managing director, Ivan Ford, announced: 'We are Toyota after-sales ▶

Public Service Vehicle
Test Certificate
ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1972, Section 43
Make BEDFORD
Approximate year of manufacture 1978
Date of issue 30th OCTOBER 1991
Date of expiry 30th OCTOBER 1992
Signature of Inspector/Tester
Authentication Stamp
WARNING
Certificates showing alterations should not be issued or accepted
(See Notes overleaf)

What to strive for and keep.

◀ agents to deal with warranty work.' However, the next stage is to move towards making the workshops a separate profit centre taking in outside work.

'There's fairly consistent demand in Scotland in general and Edinburgh in particular from foreign operators needing a Mercedes-Benz specialist.'

Mr Ford's maintenance costings proved optimistic for both bus and coach operations. He said: 'The costs are always surprising.'

Silver Coachlines has 13 Setras and, while tempted to save money on spares, learnt a valuable lesson - you don't save if the part is not a direct replacement. A non-genuine clutch lasted only two weeks instead of 87-127,000 kms.

Mr Ford made his policy clear: 'If we can source the parts elsewhere at a lower price we do so.

'Items like pads, wipers and relays can be obtained from a factor supplier in Edinburgh. Otherwise we buy genuine Kassbohrer parts.'

Workshop staffing is supplemented by an apprentice partly funded by the Government's Training and Employment Grant Scheme. Everything can be tackled except tyres and complex problems with electrics or electronics. According to Mr Ford this presents few difficulties: 'It's usually down to a fuse or a relay.'

Silver Coachlines' bus activities have swayed the Scottish company in favour of new vehicles. Two new Optare Deltas and a Mercedes-Benz minibus have such minor maintenance problems that Mr Ford is persuaded: 'If you've got the capital then buy new every time. The learning curve on old vehicles is extremely expensive.' He added: 'This can be avoided by buying new.'

Column lifts

A recurring theme with our operators - apart from a love/hate affair with Bedfords - is the glowing tribute paid to mobile column lifts as an aid to civilised working conditions. When Allander completes its new premises, then Jim Wilson says column lifts will be installed.

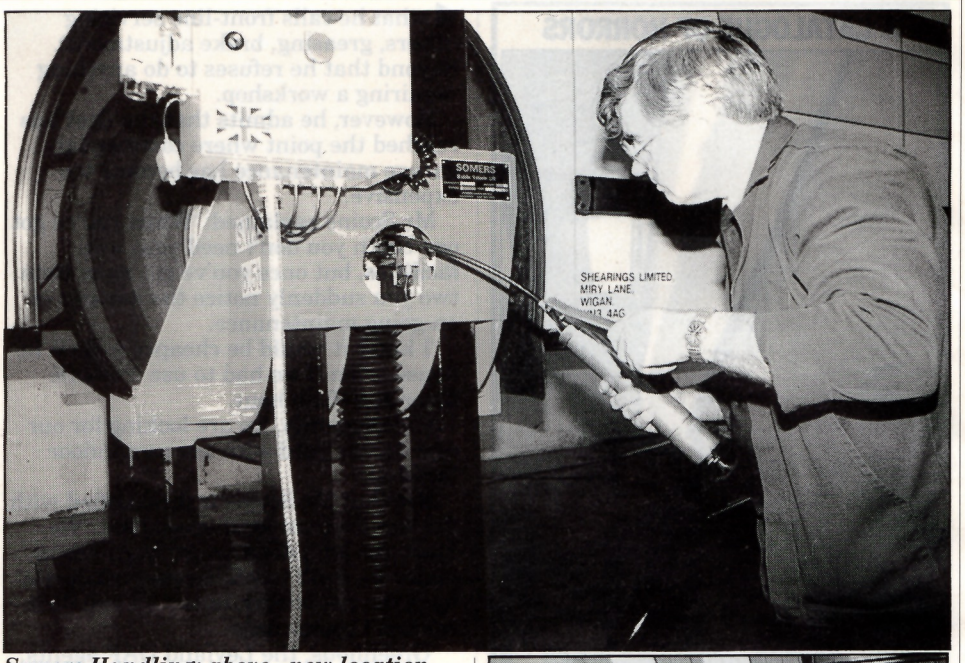
Somers Handling, of Halesowen, claims to be the UK's leading manufacturer.

Somers outsells the opposition by between 12-14 to one. By improving and refining the control panel circuitry its latest model is 30 percent faster, safer, better for inspection and servicing and can be changed from four to six wheel applications instantly. It has also improved manoeuvrability.

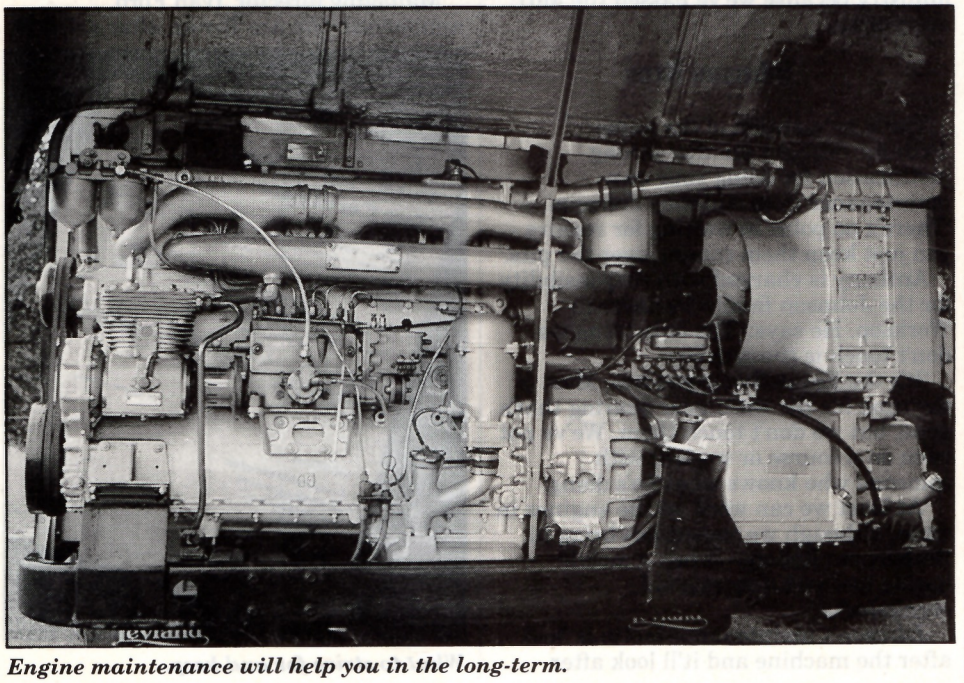
Without modification, a set of four lifts can be extended to six simply by plugging in an additional pair of lifts. Within each set, numbers two and three have the same circuitry and can be used as numbers five and six in an extended set for tri-axle applications.

Lifting speed is increased by 30 percent and the servicing of safety circuits can now be carried out while the lifts are in use, without interrupting work in progress.

A further built-in safety feature has been added to prevent the lifts from being operated before they are correctly positioned. The lift will not work until it is in 'jack down' position.



Somers Handling: above - new location of inspection cover gives easy access to safety circuits on the safety lift. Right - sealed for life bearings fitted to ground wheels have improved mobility.



Engine maintenance will help you in the long-term.

FIND OUT HOW OUR SIX OPERATORS ARE MANAGING WITH THEIR VEHICLES BY READING *COACHMART'S* NEXT MAINTENANCE DIARY IN THE NOVEMBER 17 ISSUE

'Czech-out' central Europe country

From Harry Hagan

SIR

I read with interest Marksman's 'On Target' report on his sojourn in central Europe *(Coachmart,* October 17).

My special interest stems from the fact that my company is heavily involved with the promotion of tourism in Czechoslovakia and particularly with the provision of accommodation both for the group and the independent traveller. His report was fair and enjoyable, but I would like to make the following points:

Yes, his trip was value for money - it would be remarkable to have seven nights in Blackpool for the prices he quotes, even if one lived in Fleetwood!

Yes, there is an untapped market for this slightly more adventurous kind of destination - yet not including those who yearn for the return of the 'Magic Bus' to Katmandu!

However, value for money is not just about basic 'goods' for cost; quality of service plays a large part in the perception. Marksman was unlucky with his allocation of coach crew. Surliness is not a Czechoslovak trait, but one endemic in communism and difficult to eradicate in just two years. The quality of his hotel, though not unique, has now been surpassed by many of those coming on line almost every month.

The problem in all communist planned economies was that the mid-level, mid-price hotels simply did not exist as they do in the 'west' - there was no commercial sales executive trade to stimulate them. There was little to be had between the 'Intercontinental' style (at 'Inter' prices) and the village pub.

Now we are happy to report that more pleasant, less basic hotels can be found for not too much more. Even double the price Marksman paid would be thought reasonable by the British holidaymaker. We are not necessarily speaking about 'double' the price but on a 'you get what you pay for' basis, quality of service has to be paid for.

Czechoslovakia is certainly not just attracting students and schoolchildren. The fact that Prague is nearer than Vienna, Italy and the south of France, makes it, in our experience, a new, alternative destination for the established, coach-party clientele. It is beautiful, interesting, clean, comfortable, affordable and reachable.

HARRY HAGAN
SALES DIRECTOR
CZECH-IN
HEYWOOD
ROCHDALE

Send your letters to:
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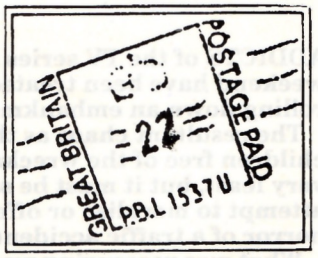

The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in *Coachmart* and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your name and address for our own information.

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Seatbelts are a burning issue

ADDICTS of the TV series London's Burning will last weekend have been treated to the sight of a coach rolling down an embankment after an accident.

The resultant chaos as the firemen attempted to cut children free of the wreckage was harrowing to say the very least, but it must be said that the episode made no attempt to moralise or offer any message other than the horror of a traffic accident.

What was reassuring was that the structure of the coach stayed intact, despite its age.

The ease with which it rolled over was a little exaggerated but overall, the coach got a good press.

Perhaps the only worry is that scenes such as these - staged or otherwise - will reinforce the view that coaches should be seatbelted.

From an operator viewpoint, the fact that the accident was the direct result of a child hurling a Coke can at the coach driver's head while standing up, amid scenes of general unruliness, will add weight to this argument.

Don't bottle up your slogan ideas

IF YOU'VE ever wondered which type of slogans win competitions, a valuable insight can be gained from Katie Redford... winner of a holiday in India.

Mrs Redford sent herself and her husband to Goa with the following slogan 'Greaves Travel Ltd cater for corporate travellers because they make business a pleasure and pleasure their business.' Not bad, is it?

Mealstop has been racking his brain - on an extremely small rack - to come up with one appropriate about the Department of Transport. How about 'The DTp... puts the Act back in Action.'

Or 'When you want answers to questions, the DTp gives you questions to answers.'

A bottle of wine to the best slogan - on any subject - submitted to *Mealstop*.

Drop a line to *Mealstop* on our fax machine, Tel: 0733 62656, by November 14.

The Sunday Sport is first with the news

***THE SUNDAY Sport* must be one of the most popular gifts in the world.**

After all, everyone who buys it is getting it for a friend.

The latest bus story - after many memorable ones, including the bus on the moon - is that a 4,000-year-old corpse found in the Outer Hebrides died waiting for a number 32 bus.

Without wishing to lend the story any credence, *Mealstop* can say that Malcolm Rifkind is allegedly to blame, and a Labour Party 'insider' calls him a name which infers he might be good at turning over pancakes.

***Mealstop* has his own theory about this latest revelation.**

He believes that the corpse is, in fact, an ancestor of publisher, David Sullivan, who died waiting for a humourous idea...

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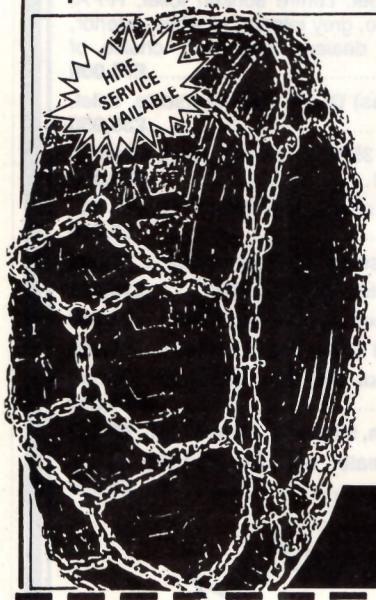

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A show to remember

THERE were quite a few new faces in a fully-filled Coach & Bus '91 Show. Familiar ones, too, were there - like Chapman Stevens which drew crowds, in two senses of the term, on its stand.

Its artist's cartoon sketch of Marksman at work will adorn my office wall for many years and must therefore be a better marketing ploy than adding to the wads of brochures that seldom see the light of day once they reach a filing cabinet.

It is not often that I have to eat my words, but my earlier information on the Plaxton Premier was clearly wrong; it is available with a low driver position.

I am also pleased to see that Plaxton has taken seriously something that I have been advocating for years - designs conducive to lower fuel consumption. This is a major cost item to which some operators, and most draughtsmen, have paid scant regard despite the fact that a two mpg difference can cost, or save, some £1,200 a year on a vehicle running about 50,000 miles annually.

That this is partially achieved by the final abandonment of trim strips is, in my opinion, another plus point. They have been costly, anachronistic, 'gipsy caravan' gilding for far too long on modern coaches. They have made vehicles look dirty quicker and increased the time spent on washing and polishing. Good riddance to them, say I.

Their abandonment, plus the application of some new technology and Computer Aided Design (CAD) has resulted in a coach with bottom panels having a degree of flexibility and also the ability to replace whole panels by just undoing a couple of bolts. This too is a long-awaited, and welcome, development.

Whilst I, personally, am pleased to see much smaller side windows on the new Plaxtons (people look out of their eyes, not their elbows), I do have some reservations whether the rest of the interior design has been adapted to compensate for the effect of smaller windows. Bulky luggage racks and an over abundance of soft trim seem to conspire to give a cramped look. Maximum passenger appeal is gained, in my opinion, by a light and spacious looking interior. Perhaps no-one told CAD that!

Marksman: courtesy of Chapman Stevens.

'But aren't they dear?' operators were saying to each other. Yes, they are, but was it not ever thus? Whether operators bought their first new coach pre-War, in the 50s or the 70s, they thought those vehicles exceedingly expensive. My comment about all exhibited vehicles was not directed at the prices - rather a lack of them! Whatever happened to the much vaunted net price that the suppliers said would bring an end to haggling and negotiation? I did not see a single vehicle on display which bore a price. Presumably all things are, again, very negotiable. This makes the leaflet on the BCC stand announcing a seminar to be held by the East Midland region of Bus & Coach Council 'Successful Negotiations for Improved Profits' all the more topical!

Something else struck me about this show. Coaches have gone so upmarket and, influenced by Diptac, buses have become so utilitarian, that the ubiquitous dual-purpose vehicle is all but extinct. It will surely be missed by many operators who found that good vehicle utilisation could be achieved by using these vehicles as buses during the week, yet as coaches during evenings and at weekends - not to mention the fact that most passengers on long, rural, bus (or contract) services, prefer the comfort of a coach-type seat?

My policy, like many others, has been to buy vehicles for frontline coach use in their early years, followed by a spell of real dual-purpose use, and then finish useful life off wholly on contract and bus operation. I did not see anything which was totally suited to this, traditional, 'cascade' vehicle life. The Optare came nearest to it. Perhaps manufacturers would do well to research this area. There is no doubt that the long departed, new bus grant helped foster the dual-purpose concept, but the demise of the grant certainly did not snuffle out the demand for the product.

There is something else that vehicle manufacturers might well task their design teams to solve; presumably to accommodate conventional windscreen wipers, the split in windscreens on high fronted vehicles puts the large piece of glass at the bottom and the small at the top.

Logic demands that the joint should not be in the line of the passengers' vision and that the smaller (cheaper piece to replace) glass should be in the (more vulnerable) bottom position. I admit to having no answer to this conundrum myself, but feel sure that it should not be beyond the wit of some design boffin to produce a solution.

I think that, somewhere within the first 10 pieces I ever wrote for the Marksman column, I pleaded for designers to consult with drivers regarding their cock-pit needs.

There is no significant evidence that this has happened. As a minimum, coach drivers need somewhere that they can reach whilst seated (i.e. not above their heads) to stow waybills, tickets, tapes, maps and tachograph discs. They require a smooth area on which to write (even a perfectly flat steering wheel boss) and a spring clip on the dashboard to secure whatever form of route description they are using for the current journey.

Meeting these basic needs not only makes for driver convenience, it creates a contented and safe driver and removes the unsightly (and potentially unsafe) clutter that so often is found blocking screen air vents and creating reflective images on the windscreen.

I felt sorry for whoever it was who had to have a call put out requesting: 'If anyone has a set of 24 volt jump leads it would be appreciated if they could take them to the demonstrator vehicle park.'

Likewise, I recognised several ex-operators there whose excursions into coaching became a spin to the bankruptcy courts. Whether they fancied a second ride around, or were simply there for masochistic reasons, I neither asked or discovered.

This show was a magnificent affair, of inestimable value to the industry.

BCC is entitled to feel proud of the way this event has developed from very humble beginnings.

Weekly report on law and the coach operator by Michael Jewell

Charnwood blasted over its inspection records

INSPECTION record sheets produced by Charnwood were criticised as being 'virtually useless' by the West Midland traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, at a Birmingham public inquiry.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that the numbers on the sheets did not tie-up with the Tester's Manual numbers and neither was there the required certificate that the vehicle was in a safe and roadworthy condition.

The criticism came during the continued disciplinary hearing involving Presstoon Travel Ltd, of Rugby.

The proceedings were adjourned in August after the commissioner required all the company's vehicles to be subjected to a further MoT test because of their age and the number of prohibitions issued *(Coachmart,* September 5).

For Presstoon, Norman Carless said that all the matters required by the commissioner on the last occasion had been dealt with. There was now a system of four-weekly inspections and letters had been sent to the drivers and fitters pointing out their responsibilities.

After Mr Carless had said that duplicate books had been issued to drivers in which they were to report defects, Mr Mervyn Pugh said that what he did not like was the fact that the Charnwood specimen book was not numbered.

Geoffrey Toon, a director, said that he had thought that the Charnwood book would be simpler for the drivers to fill in than blank sheets.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that a simple system had been explained to Mr Toon on the last occasion and he had complicated it. History showed that people who complicated a simple system had fallen foul.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Toon said the company had 13 vehicles. One vehicle, used on contracts in Northants and Leicestershire, was kept at an out-station during the week and returned to base at the weekends.

That was not very satisfactory, said Mr Mervyn Pugh.

Pressed by the commissioner, Mr Toon said the company only currently had 13 vehicles on the road.

It had four old Fords at its premises which had been sold and were awaiting collection.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that he expected the truth. Mr Toon had told him the company had 13 vehicles when in fact it had 17.

He was also concerned that of the vehicles put through the MoT test, three failed first time.

Mr Carless said that in one case it was a question of a leaking diaphragm, which could easily have been rectified and could have happened at any time. Similarly, with a fractured spring leaf.

Suggesting that the commissioner was splitting hairs, Mr Carless said that the four vehicles awaiting collection had been sold and replaced by fresh vehicles.

Mr Toon said the transaction had taken place over the telephone a fortnight ago.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that was after the last hearing, when he was told the company had 13 vehicles.

Somebody had subsequently written and told him that Presstoon had 17 vehicles. That was why he had asked the question.

Mr Toon gave an undertaking that the four vehicles would be removed from the company's premises by the following evening.

He said that the vehicle at the out-station was driven by his wife, and where it was parked was two miles from their home.

Questioned by Mr Mervyn Pugh, Mr Toon thought that the company could get about 18 vehicles into its operating centre. If somebody suggested it could only get 10 vehicles in they would be wrong, he said.

Cutting the duration of the licence so that it expires at the end of October 1992, Mr Mervyn Pugh said that would give the company 12 months to prove to him - and the schools as it should not be forgotten that the proceedings were instigated by a complaint from a head teacher - that the planned system of maintenance was working.

He required the registration numbers of the vehicles to be operated to be delivered to the traffic area office within 14 days, and any changes to be further notified to the traffic area office.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said it was to the company's credit that it had been reported that the vehicles were generally in good condition and that Presstoon worked hard to ensure they were well maintained.

Indicating that he expected all the company's vehicles to be kept at its operating centre, Mr Mervyn Pugh said that if the company wished to keep one elsewhere it would have to seek an additional operating centre.

Brian Pedley escapes revocation

WEST Midland traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, has decided not to revoke the licence held by Brian Pedley, of Heath Hayes, Cannock.

However, he has cut its duration, so that it now expires at the end of next March. He also reduced the authorisation from three vehicles to one.

Mr Pedley first appeared before the commissioner in August, when disciplinary proceedings were adjourned for further evidence about the maintenance arrangements *(Coachmart,* September 5).

He had acquired the categorisation and amplification of defects books from the Vehicle Inspectorate, said Mr Pedley.

He already had a Tester's Manual and he had set up a flow chart. He had one vehicle in possession and did not need a licence for more.

Producing the vehicle's MoT certificate, Mr Pedley said that it had gone through the test in August without any problems. He held a PSV driving licence and drove the vehicle himself occasionally.

After Mr Pedley had produced his driving licences, Mr Mervyn Pugh said it appeared that he 'had a heavy right foot.'

Mr Pedley said that the offences had occurred while he was driving his car, and Mr Mervyn Pugh pointed out that they still counted against him.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said he would not revoke the licence, though he had been very close to doing so.

He wanted the renewal to be considered at a public inquiry, at which he would require clear evidence that the maintenance system was working well and there had been no prohibitions that caused him concern.

Weekly report on law and the coach operator by Michael Jewell

Knights (Coaches) given a lifeline

KNIGHTS Coaches (Swansea) Ltd has been given a lifeline to keep on operating until the end of November, by the South Wales traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh.

Disciplinary proceedings had been adjourned in September to enable the company to put seven of its 10 vehicles through the MoT test *(Coachmart,* September 26).

Royden Kendrick, a director, said that four of the seven coaches had passed, and the other three were ready to be re-submitted. He agreed that six of the seven had failed to pass first time.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said it was not a very good record and it was a question of whether the company should be allowed to continue.

He found it difficult to understand why, when the company received a letter in August following an unsatisfactory fleet check, steps were not immediately taken to get its vehicles into good condition. He did not understand the company's attitude. Perhaps the action he had taken in September had been wrong, and he should have suspended the licence.

'I have to ask myself if you are a fit and proper person to have a licence - that's how serious it is,' he said.

Commissioner said vehicle defects had been a 'catalogue of disasters.'

Some of the defects found when the vehicles were presented for test, including serious brake defects, indicated neglect. It had been 'a catalogue of disasters.' It showed the company's approach had not been a responsible one.

For Knights, William Arthur said it had put into practice the advice given in September, instituting a pre-planned maintenance system and sending letters to its drivers outlining their responsibilities.

Cutting the licence duration so it expires at the end of November, Mr Mervyn Pugh said Knights could only use the vehicles that had up to date MoT certificates. Other coaches could only be put into service when the traffic area was advised they had passed a test. A renewal application would have to be submitted immediately, when prohibition notices not the subject of the present proceedings, would be dealt with.

'But if you collect any more prohibitions that constitute a danger to the public and they are not spotted through inspections, you are not going to have a licence,' warned Mr Mervyn Pugh. 'If you want to continue operating, I am prepared for you to do so if your buses are safe. You are carrying people. It is my duty to see passengers don't have to think about the safety of buses.'

There was no guarantee that the company would have a new licence in December, he added. It depended upon how it now ran its fleet.

He said: 'This has been something brought on entirely by yourself. I hope you realise how lucky you are. You asked for a chance and you have been given that chance.'

Pegasus gets two-year licence renewal at disciplinary hearing

DOUBTS about the financial position of Warrington-based Pegasus Continental Travel led to the firm's appearance before the North Western deputy traffic commissioner, Kenneth Birchall.

Pegasus had applied for the renewal of its one-vehicle international licence. The firm had initially been granted a licence of one year and Mr Birchall said the traffic area office had tried on a number of occasions to obtain accounts from the firm before eventually being successful.

Christine Chadwick, a partner, said its accountant had taken rather a long time to get the accounts finished, and they had only come through recently.

It was the company's first venture into coaching. It was operating a 49-seat single decker, doing private hire work and its own tours.

'It has turned out fine apart from buying a duff coach,' said Miss Chadwick. 'We have had to spend a lot of money on it.'

After Mr Birchall had commented that the firm had had a poor year financially, Miss Chadwick said: 'The accounts say so.'

She agreed the company had made a loss of £14,000, saying it had incurred a lot of expense on the coach, paying out £12,000 for engine components. The rest was bad debts.

Partner, Christine Chadwick, admitted the company had made a £14,000 loss.

The company had come to an arrangement with the repairers to pay the bill off at £500 a month. It was happy with that and so was the bank. The vehicle had been off the road on and off for a good six months and the company had been forced to hire another vehicle while it was in the garage.

Mr Birchall said that the accounts showed a figure of under £1,000 for wages, and Miss Chadwick said they had not taken anything out for the first year, having had the big expense for the engine.

She drove the coach herself and if two drivers were needed her partner also drove.

If a driver was paid £20 a week it would change the complexion of the accounts, said Mr Birchall.

The bank reference was very non-committal and not really worth the paper it was written on. The bank statements produced, for July and August only, did not give much information.

Miss Chadwick said that was all the company had been told to send in. The balance sheet was dated February 21 and it had enjoyed a very good year since.

The company did not owe anybody anything, apart from North West Trucks, and had maintained the payments to it.

The company had been to see a broker about the bad debts and he was trying to collect them. She felt that the broker had been far too lenient with people who owed money. The coach, a 1984 DAF LAG, was running well at the moment.

Mr Birchall said that he was prepared to renew the licence, but for two years only. He appreciated that the firm had only been in business for 18 months, but a lot could happen in the present period of recession.

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Take a trouble-free trip to the theatre

Tourism editor, Mark Williams, takes expert advice from the middleman on how, when and where to book theatre trips. Ticket agency boss, Brian Huxstep, highlights the pitfalls.

THE WEST End and its glittering lights is one of London tourism's success stories.

The age when theatre-goers were largely an ageing population of spinsters in sequinned gowns and fox stoles is long gone. The popular theatre is here, and with it the opportunity for coach operators throughout the country to make money.

For the average working man, the only chance he has to see a big West End show is to go by coach. If he is travelling any distance, his choice may well be limited by the price of overnight stays in notoriously expensive London hotels - prices which the operator or wholesaler can significantly reduce.

In many cases, the limiting factor is the non-availability of tickets. Box offices have often allocated seats to group booking agencies, and this may push further business the coach operator's way.

But while the travel into the West End - with all the parking problems that poses - may be fraught with problems, actually booking tickets may prove even more hazardous. It's a cash-up-front situation, and this makes it all the more important that you know exactly what you are getting.

The first problem is deciding which show to book. Private hires are obviously no problem. If you are prospecting, the national newspaper reviews offer good advice, word of mouth is useful, and you could take hints from *Coachmart's* own monthly West End theatre guide, Stagescene.

Ticket agencies are also helpful. Clearly, they have something to gain from ensuring your group has a good time. If you do not know the shows on offer, ask them for their good and free advice.

'The most valuable advice I can offer coach operators is to ask what face value the tickets will have,' said Brian Huxstep. 'Some will be bought at discount rate, but may have the discounted rate printed on them. Clearly, it's good news for the operator if they carry the standard, individual rate. That gives the client a perception of good value.

Popular and great value - but theatre trips pose peculiar problems.

'The operator must know what will be printed on the ticket or he may be accused of rip-offs. This is even more important when the agent has to pay a premium to obtain rare tickets. You can't sell a punter a theatre trip for £50, then give him a ticket printed with £10, even if you actually paid £30 yourself including a booking fee. It should be made plain to the client if a premium is being paid on top of the ticket price.'

Don't expect any significant discount on the big London shows. Indeed, you may be lucky to get tickets. Mr Huxstep says you should establish the booking period for the top five shows to be in with a chance. It's a case of the early bird catching the worm.

'For instance, I'm now booking tickets for summer shows in the West End. They will soon be sold,' he told *Coachmart*.

Nothing infuriates clients more than paying top dollar for second-rate seats. Ask the agent or box office where the seats are. Agents sometimes cannot tell you, but ask in any case.

Payment systems are also worth checking out. If you regularly run theatre trips, you may benefit from having an account with your agent. Clearly you must ask what terms of payment are offered.

Continues on page 27 ▶

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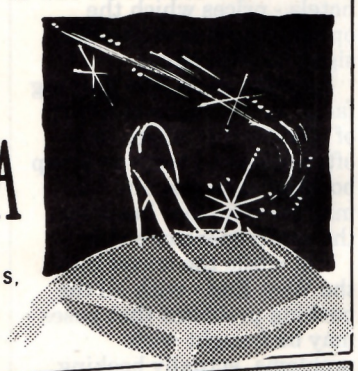

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DOROTHY PAUL
DENNY WILLIS

OPENS DEC 12

◀ Take a trouble-free trip to the theatre

From page 25

Perhaps more importantly - but something which often slips the operator's mind - is to ask how long the agency or box office will hold tickets before payment.

Make a mistake here and it could be both expensive and embarrassing.

Many operators like to deal direct with box offices. That's fine, but you may find agents have tickets for shows which the box office says are sold out. But as mentioned above, beware swingeing booking fees.

Cancellations are always a hassle and sometimes expensive, but some agencies will sell on seats which you cannot fill, giving the operator some of the price back.

Des O'Connor gets car star company

CHILDREN'S TV star Brum the car joins Des O'Connor on stage at the Birmingham Hippodrome for a lavish production of Cinderella, starting Christmas Eve.

The little car, featured on BBC children's TV, will be fresh in children's minds, having last appeared on the box shortly before Christmas. In one episode, he turns up at Birmingham Hippodrome trying to see an opera. He then goes into rehearsals with Des, Peggy Mount as the fairy godmother, Ian Smith - Harold from Neighbours - and the rest of the pantomime line-up.

Tickets are on sale at the Hippodrome box office, Tel: 021 622 6043

Check out coach parking in London

ANYONE who has travelled in London will be aware of the nightmare of traffic, particularly around the West End.

London never sleeps, so it's not just matinee visits which could be fraught with traffic problems. Coaches have become an emotive subject for Londoners, most of whom do not see the environmental aspects of group travel, but are painfully aware of double-parked vehicles. Coaches invariably take the larger part of the blame for hold-ups.

Set-down and pick-up need not be a problem. Clearly it is wise to check direct with the theatre for details.

Additionally, the operator should check with the Police Coach Advisory Service for full details and maps of short-term coach parking. Coaches are now banned from many streets, largely due to occasional visitors to the city. London coach operators will not thank their out-of-London colleagues for exacerbating their parking 'war' with planners and attractions.

Coach parking: a dilemma in London.

Full information and free advice on London's coach parking is available from The Metropolitan Police Coach Advisory Service, 14 Tintagel House, Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TT, Tel: 071 230 5332.

Group Sales Box Office promotes panto sales

TICKETS for Jack and the Beanstalk, starring Bob Carolgees, Jean Boht from Bread and Cilla Black, are available from Group Sales Box Office.

The panto, which runs from December 14 to January 19 at London's Piccadilly, is likely to be the hit of the festive season, says the firm, and tickets at group rates are likely to be snapped up quickly. For mature groups, GSBO can offer The Buddy Holly Story, which met with wide acclaim when it was first staged two years ago.

Details of all shows available from Group Sales Box Office are available by phoning 071 930 6123, or Fax number 071 930 4327.

Leicester Haymarket wins two top regional theatre awards

LEICESTER'S Haymarket theatre has won two regional awards for its productions.

The artistic director, Paul Kerryson, got the Best Musical Award for his Sweeney Todd - staged at the Oldham Coliseum shortly before he joined The Haymarket. And the Best Actress Award went to Cheryl Campbell for her portrayal of Blanche du Bois in A Streetcar Named Desire.

The Haymarket stages Arthur Miller's The Price from December 7, including Sylvia Sims in the cast. Alongside her are Roy Barraclough from Coronation Street and Ed Bishop from UFO.

Its family entertainment this Christmas is The Little Prince, an imaginative tale woven around a magical prince and a great deal of original music by composer, Mark Vibrans.

The show runs from November 27 to January 1.

Details of all group bookings are from the Haymarket box office, Tel: 0533 530021, Fax: 0533 513310

Next week...

Coachmart spotlights tourism on the Isle of Wight

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Amsterdam has something for everyone

The Dutch capital of Amsterdam has always been a popular venue for coach operators. *Coachmart* editor, Anthony Hawkswell, looks at some of the attractions it has to offer.

Amsterdam: a city of contrasts.

AMSTERDAM is a city of contrasts. On the one hand it vibrates to the lively beat of the notorious 'red light' district, while on the other the pace is more tranquil in the shape of a beautiful canalled city steeped in history and sophistication.

But it is this clash of cultures which makes it one of the most popular tourist attractions in the world - especially with visitors from Britain. The Amsterdam Tourist Board says that this year it expects 18.3 percent of its tourists to come from the UK.

And in 1992 the ATB is predicting that 329,500 tourists will cross the North Sea to discover its unique charms. That large number takes into account Floriade - the once in a decade horticultural exhibition which is being staged from April 10 to October 11 less than an hour's drive from the Dutch capital.

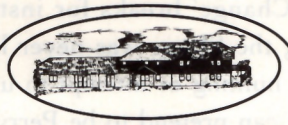
To keep pace with the increase in tourist traffic, Amsterdam continues to add and improve to its long list of attractions. Next week the biggest casino in Europe - Holland's Grand Casino opens its doors in the city. The venue expects to pull in 2,500 punters a day to play the 32 gaming tables and 300 slot machines.

Next year a massive complex - called The Lido - is due to open and will include even more cafes, bars and nightclubs.

And popular venues like Madame Tussaud - the second branch of the famous London waxwork museum which was opened in 1970 - is being continually updated. As well as Dutch household names like Queen Beatrix and the infamous spy, the Mata Hari, visitors can also discover what Amsterdam in the 17th Century was like.

A crowd puller over the next three months is expected to be the Rembrandt Exhibition which is being staged between December 4 and March 1 next year.

Continues on page 31...



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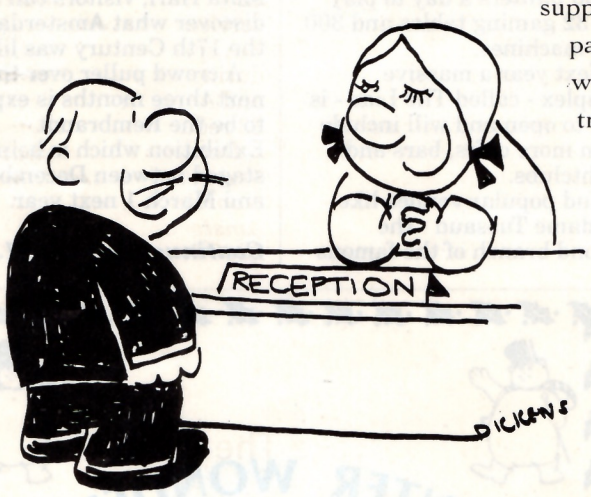

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from page 29...

It is a celebration of the famous painter's work and will feature 50 paintings by the man himself.

Amsterdam is the second city to host the 'Rembrandt, the Master and his Workshop' exhibition.

It was first seen in Berlin and will be followed by a similar event at the British Museum and the National Gallery in London next year. Tickets can only be booked in advance for the Dutch treat and details are available from the ATB.

To coincide with the Rembrandt theme and his connection with Amsterdam, the ATB has also organised a special Rembrandt Walk which follows in his footsteps, visiting locations which were significant in his life and those of his apprentices.

Special rates will be available during the Rembrandt Exhibition, which includes the 'Winter the Amsterdam Way' package of special hotel rates and an Amsterdam discount passport. The latter gives free or reduced admission to selected exhibitions and attractions and discount at some cafes.

Amsterdam has plenty to offer the British tourist. Not only are the Dutch very friendly, nearly everyone speaks English which makes it that much easier to get around.

Further details from the VVV Amsterdam Tourist Office, PO Box 3901, 1001 AS Amsterdam. Tel: 010 31 20 626 6466.

How to rest after all that pleasure

THE nightlife in Amsterdam may seem to go on forever, but tourists will eventually have to succumb to the rigours of enjoyment and return to their hotels.

Amsterdam boasts over 290 hotels and has 27,000 beds available at any one time. These vary from the city's 11 de-luxe hotels to a those in the 'plain but simple' category. However, with customers demanding increasingly better facilities, the choice of accommodation is becoming a very important factor.

Nearly all hotels in the city offer package deals for coach operators and the price obviously depends on the quality of service required. *Coachmart* visited a typical hotel in the superior tourist class to see what operators could expect for their money.

The Arthur Frommer on Noorderstrat - just five minutes tram ride from the city centre - is part of the hotel Mercure franchise. It is described as a typical Amsterdam hotel set in peaceful surroundings.

Back in the Sixties the historic building belonged to the Weavers Guild, but it has since been completely transformed into a modern hotel with all the facilities you could need for a pleasant stay.

The fact that it is a franchise operation shines through in the warm and friendly the staff treat their customers - a far cry from many hotels which often seem so cold and impersonal.

Each of the 90 rooms comes complete with mini-bar, television - including satellite TV in English - telephone and bathroom with shower and toilet.

Rates from November to March 31 next year are: Twin (per person) £23.43; single supplement £7.80; triple room (per person) £19.50. From April 1 to October 31 next year, these rates will rise to: Twin £32.80; single supplement £17.18; triple £25. All prices include taxes, service and buffet breakfast.

A special offer is being run during the months of July and August when there is a £3 reduction on all rates.

Details from Arthur Frommer Amsterdam, Noorderstraat 46, 1017 TV, Amsterdam. Tel: 01031 206 2203 28.

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Bargains on offer in Belgium

BELGIAN bargain breaks are available from a central reservation agency until Easter 1992.

Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent and the Ardennes have teamed up to agree on group rates as low as £12.50 a night, bed and breakfast, for two and three-star hotels in the region. To qualify for the low rates, the stay must be a minimum of two nights, from Monday to Thursday.

Three-night breaks, extending into the weekend, also qualify for the discount being offered by Belgian Bargain Breaks, based at Canterbury.

Typical rates are those of a hotel featured on ITV's 'Wish You Were Here...?' holiday programme, which has put together short breaks which include a welcome drink, live music... and a free vacuum cleaning of the coach.

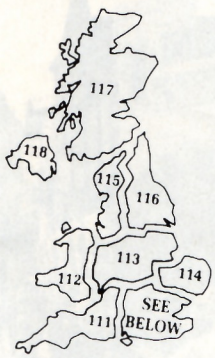
The Hotel Badouin in Ostende has brought rates down to £10.40 a night for midweek stays and £13.20 for other nights, giving a free Monday night stay for three-day bookings which cover Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

All rates are based on a minimum 20, bed and breakfast with en suite and include all service charges.

More details of the hotels are from BBB, EuroTourism Marketing, PO Box 172, Petham, Canterbury, CT4 5SZ, Tel and Fax: 0227 87396.

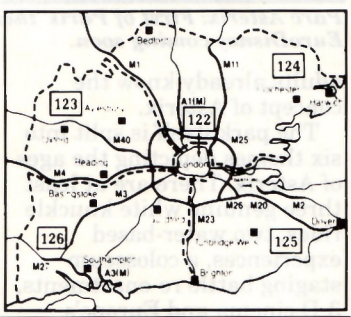
ROADWATCH

This Roadwatch report was compiled by *Coachmart* with the help of the AA. If there are other points of information which you require, write to Roadwatch PSV, *Coachmart*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS.



For the latest information, call AA Roadwatch on 0836 401, followed by:
110 for motorways across Britain
127 for M25
117 for Scotland
116 for north-east England
115 for north-west England
114 for East Anglia
113 for Midlands
112 for Wales
111 for West Country

The south-east of England is divided up as follows:
126 for area between M4 and M23
125 for area between M23 and Dartford Tunnel
124 for area between Dartford Tunnel and M1
122 for Central London
(See map, right)
Calls are charged at 36p per minute off peak and 48p at other times.



France
French Railways (SNCF), Paris Metro and buses were on 24-hour strike last week. Limited service in operation. Public transport in some large towns and cities was also affected by the strike.
New roadworks
N165 Le Relecq Kerhuon, east of Brest. Speed limit restriction. (until Dec 21)
Italy
Petrol stations in Italy were on strike last week; no fuel problems reported in Autrostrada.

Major mountain passes closed 24/10

Agnel	(France)
Furka	(Switzerland)
Galibier	(France)
Grand St Bernard	(Switzerland-Italy) (Closed at night)
Grimsel	(Switzerland)
Iseran	(France) (Temporarily closed)
Izoard	(France)
Klausen	(Switzerland)
Lautaret	(France) (Closed at night)
Lombarde	(France)
Nufenen	(Switzerland)
Resia	(Italy) (Closed at night)
Restefond (La Bonette)	(France)
Susten	(Switzerland)
Tourmalet	(France)

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST

M1 Hertfordshire: Contraflow at J5 (A41, near Watford).
M20 Kent: Contraflow between J5 and J8 (Maidstone West/Hollingbourne)
M20 Kent: Lane closures on both carriageways between Junctions 10 and 11 (Ashford/Hythe).
M26 Kent: Contraflow between J2A (Wrotham) and the M20.
M3 Hampshire: Contraflow between J4 and J5 (Farnborough/Hook).
M4 Berkshire: Lane closure both ways J12 and J13 (Theale/Newbury).
M23 Sussex: Contraflow between J9-J10 (Gatwick/Crawley).
M23 Surrey: Contraflow between J13 and J14 (Staines/Heathrow).
A40M London: Lane closures both ways on Westway.
A406 London: Contraflow on North Circular road between Staples Corner and Neasden Underpass.
A13 London: Restrictions in Poplar cause severe delays.
A34 Oxfordshire: Contraflow south of Milton interchange.
A27 Sussex: Contraflow on Shoreham flyover.

MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

M6 West Midlands: Contraflow between J7 and J9 (Gt Barr/Wednesbury). The Northbound entry slip road is closed at J7.
M6 Staffordshire: Restrictions both ways J12-J14 (A5/Stafford North).
M5 Hereford/Worcester: Southbound entry and exit slip roads closed at J6 (Worcester North). Diversions.
A4540 West Midlands: Restrictions at Hockley (Birmingham).
A6 Leicestershire. Restrictions at Market Harborough. Also affecting the A427.
A510 Northamptonshire: Temporary lights between Finedon and Wellingborough.
A47 Cambridgeshire: Temporary lights at Thorney, severe delays occur.
A11 Norfolk: Contraflow between Norwich and Wymondham.
A12 Suffolk: Contraflow at Felixstowe.

WALES AND WEST

M4 West Glamorgan: Restrictions both ways J39-J41 (Groes/Pentyla).
M5 Gloucestershire: Contraflow J11-J12 (near Gloucester).
M5 Somerset: Lane restrictions between Junctions 26 and 27 (Wellington/Tiverton). Weekdays only.
A485 Dyfed: Temporary lights at Tregaron.
A48 West Glamorgan: Contraflow between Llandarcy and Lonlas.
A4080 Gwynedd: Temporary lights on Menai Suspension Bridge.
A35 Dorset: Temporary lights between Dorchester and Puddleton.
A399 Devon: Temporary lights at Combe Martin.

NORTH

M56 Greater Manchester: Restrictions on the airport link road.
A56 Cheshire: Contraflow J10-J12 (Stretton/Clifton).
M66 Greater Manchester: Lane restrictions both ways between J1 and J3 (A56/Pilsworth).
M62 Humberside: Restrictions eastbound J35 (Langham).
A1(M) County Durham: Contraflow between Chester-le-Street and Birtley.
M18 South Yorkshire: Contraflow near J2 (Wadworth).
M18 South Yorkshire: Contraflow between J4 and J5 (Doncaster).
A6 Derbyshire: Contraflow on Taddington bypass.
A59 Lancashire: Contraflow between Penwortham and Hutton.
Al Northumberland: Temporary lights at southern end of the Alnwick bypass.
A59 North Yorkshire: Temporary lights on Harrogate to Skipton road.

SCOTLAND

A701 Lothian: (Edinburgh to Moffat Route) - contraflow near Milton Bridge.
A74 Strathclyde: Various lane closures at Elevanfoot.
A77 Strathclyde: Various lane closures North of Fenwick.

Brighton to stage a festival of fun

THE BRIGHTON Festival, which starts the British festival season, promises upwards of 20 arts events a day during May.

Brighton has teamed up with Vienna and Holland festivals to commission a major work from the Music of Theatre of Antwerp, and a number of other international events have been organised.

Theatre productions include Shakespeare's As You Like It, with Emma Thompson.

The Brighton Festival takes in film shows, comedy nights, childrens events, parades and parties.

All can be booked through the festival organisers, and itineraries suggested.

'There are generous discounts for groups and a priority booking service with flexible methods of payment,' says marketing assistant, Lisa Wolfe.

Full details are from Graham Blight, 111 Church Street, Brighton, BN1 1UD, Tel: 0273 676926, Fax: 0273 822095.

Champagne Alan is his name

ALAN Warner, of East Midlands Motor Services of Staveley, Derbyshire, was the lucky winner of holiday accommodation specialist Czech-In's champagne draw at the Coach & Bus '91 show at Birmingham's NEC.

Paris theme park all set for EuroDisney challenge

PARIS is set to become the theme park capital of Europe with the opening of EuroDisney next April - a spectacular site in direct competition with the existing favourite, Parc Asterix.

Situated less than half-an-hour north of the French capital, Parc Asterix has long been popular with the indigenous population, but its potential as an international tourist attraction has still to be developed.

With its own exit from the A1 autoroute, the park is ideal for day visits from the UK during weekend breaks to Paris.

Parking (155 coaches) and administration facilities are excellent, and on a *Coachmart* visit staff were found to be friendly, informative and English speaking.

Asterix is a particularly Franco phenomenon, but that does not devalue its attraction to British visitors. As long as the children know Asterix and his laid-back conquerers are the good guys, and the Romans and Gauls are the baddies, then the attractions can be enjoyed to the full. In most cases translation is not needed to commentaries - instruction/warning signs are translated - and most British adults already know the concept of Asterix.

Parc Asterix: First of Paris' theme parks with challenge of EuroDisney coming soon.

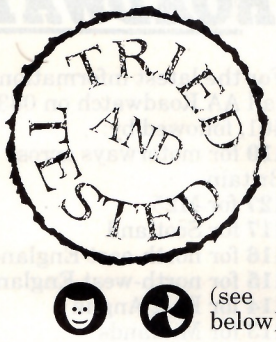
The park itself is split into six themes depicting the ages of Asterix. There are at least three genuine white knuckle rides, two water-based experiences, a colosseum staging battle re-enactments, 3-D cinema and Europe's largest dolphinarium.

Everything is spotlessly clean, and during midweek queues averaged less than 15 minutes.

If there is any criticism, it is the preponderence of eateries and shops, although the selling is very low key. Food and beverage is reasonably priced and of good quality, while the shops have, in the majority of cases, the attraction of craftsmen creating in full view the products to be sold - an education in itself. Only in the funfair area, where rides and stalls were extra, did one question the validity of the all-inclusive entrance price.

Entry costs 145 francs (approx £15.50) for adults and 100 francs (£11) for children under 12. Under threes are free. Group rates are available on France 44 60 60 00. Parc Asterix has also teamed up with a variety of local hotel groups offering a 25 per cent discount on presentation of an entrance ticket. Closest of the major groups is probably the Novotel in Survilliers or Aulnay Sous Bois. The Charles de Gaulle airport is very close, as is the famous lace town of Chantilly.

Details: Parc Asterix, Siege social, BP 8, 60128 Plailly, tel: 44 62 31 31. Hotels with discounts: Novotel 48 66 27 97/34 68 69 80; Mercure 34 68 28 28; Ibis 44 23 16 27/44 53 70 50; Mercure (1) 34 68 28 28.



(see below)

Verdict: Suitable for mobility impaired (scored 'fair'), elderly and retired (scored 'good') and all familes and singles (scored 'very good').
Catering scored 'very good' in all areas, gift shop scored 'fair' and coach access 'very good'.
No attractions or town centres within walking distance.

Cookson deal on offer

THE ROMANCE of Catherine Cookson Country can be had for just £66 per head for a half-board weekend thanks to a new deal from the Northumbrian Experience.

The package includes tour itineraries, entry to Beamish Open Air Museum, a 'Geordie' night with traditional entertainment, and half-board accommodation at one of Durham's colleges.

Details from Andrew Duff, Tel: 091 374 3454.

Guide to Tried and Tested symbols

(Cut out for future reference)

Abbey/ Cathedral

Zoo/ wildlife park

Vineyard/ distillery/ brewery

Theatre/ show/ exhibition

Railway

Farm

Historic house with garden (if any)

Cruise

Parkland

Theme/ leisure park

Garden/ garden centre

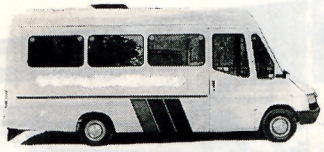
Cave/ mine

Castle

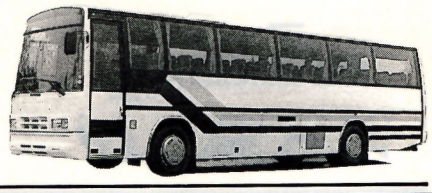
Museum

Nature reserve

Sports/ aqua centre



COACHES WELCOME



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- ★ Coach Parking
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- ★ 25 bedrooms (en suite available)
- ★ Good mix of doubles, twins and family rooms
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- ★ Licensed Bar
- ★ Cabaret at least once each week
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- ★ Tastefully decorated
- ★ Very friendly and very efficient
- ★ Early season w/e breaks from £32pp

Call us on **0253 21655** *for details or better still – come on over and see for yourself.*

"The hotel with the friendly atmosphere"

(21660/CWL)

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Tel. now and ask for Irene

(0253) 42607

(22326OWL)

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DUNDARACH HOTEL, PILTOCHRY

30 bedrooms en suite, totally refurbished, tea making facilities, telephones, colour TVs, centrally heated throughout, within walking distance of the Festival Theatre and town centre.

0796 2862

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03502 462

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where a warm welcome awaits you

(21190/CWL)

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3/4 COACH CAPACITY FOR MEALS
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15 miles to Ludlow/Shrewsbury, 20 miles to Ironbridge, 100 yards to Cardingwell Valley turn

(20869/CWL)

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(22284/CWL)

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Winter 91/92 Only £58 7 nights F/B
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facing seafront & Japanese Gardens

(21167/CWL)

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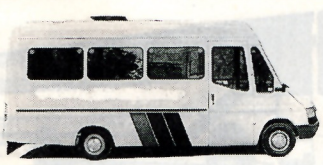
(21853/CWL)



COACHES WELCOME

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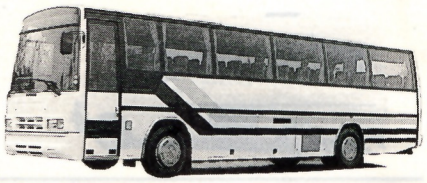

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Warm, friendly, comfortable, good food, choice menu, nightly entertainment.
All bedrooms with tea, coffee making facilities, Sky TV. Most with private bathrooms.
1992 HALF BOARD AUGUST 6 nights **£157.30**
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Telephone Tenby (0834) 2377 ask for Malcolm Thomas
APRIL+ OCTOBER '92 5 nights mid week **£15.00 + VAT**
RING NOW FOR WEEKENDS (22325/CWL)

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All this with spectacular views and only 3 minutes from all amenities.
Availability for Christmas & New Year programme. Also taking bookings for next year.
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New frame tents. Available for group hire from 12th April 1992. On quality camp site close to Europe's No. 1 Theme Park.

Ideal family accom!
From £9.50 p.p.p.n.

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French Locations,
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(10790/CWL)

NEWQUAY MINERVA HOTEL

Family run hotel only yards from beach and town.

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Pre-Christmas Special – 2 dates available for Dec 91
4 nights £13.25 pppn – en suite £2.50 pppn extra
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★ Full Entertainment
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★ *Probably the best value for money in the world* ★

(22319/CWL)

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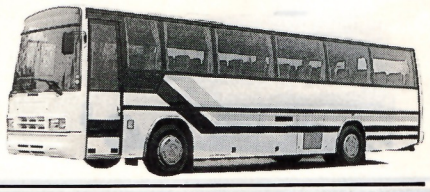
Tel. (0202) 290600

(19970/CWL)

COACHES WELCOME



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(22294/BAR)

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£4,500 + VAT
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(22280/BAR)

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Semi automatic, 12 months MoT.
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Also Almex Ticket equipment from £35 + VAT.
Telephone for details
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PJK, 29 seater, 1980 W, air doors, year's MoT, **£4,650**
1983 SWB TRANSIT
12 seater, year's MoT, PSV, spotless, **£1,650 + VAT**
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(22315/BAR)

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1972 BEDFORD YRQ Plaxton, 45-seater.
1973 FORD R SERIES Dominant, 49-seater.
Both MoT'd, excellent condition and in daily use.
£1,850 each or £3,000 the pair + VAT
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(22347/BAR)

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Plaxton Supreme, 45-seater coach, power door, MoT May '92.
£4,250 + VAT
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(22283/BAR)

BARGAIN BUS

LEYLAND LEOPARD 680
Semi-auto box, 10m Plaxton, 31 seats fitted with 2 tables, toilet, video/TV fittings, drinks machine. Tested to July '92, good condition for 1974 coach.
Quick Sale
£4,000 ovno
Tel. evenings 061-860 4336
(22357/BAR)

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SPECIALISED COACH FOR SALE

Due to fleet replacement Strathyre has a specially adapted coach for sale. This is a unique opportunity to purchase a professionally adapted PSV coach to cater for the ever increasing disabled market. The vehicle is in daily use and is fitted with DTp approved lift and is certified to comply with DTp VSE 87/1 Code of Conduct.

BEDFORD YNV – PLAXTON

This vehicle was first registered on 15th May 1984. It has a turbo charged Bedford 500 engine with six speed box and is bodied with a Plaxton 3200. There is a Ratcliffe Steplift mounted midway down the coach on the nearside. There is a very large wheelchair accessible toilet with sufficient room to accommodate a wheelchair and attendant. Also fitted is a coffee/tea machine, fridge, video/TV, stereo/PA and curtains. There are 34 seats (30 are recliners) with DTp approved and certified wheelchair tracking to accommodate up to 10 fixed wheelchairs on board. This vehicle is regularly used for overseas trips and is in Class A condition, with around 190,000 kms covered. Reg No A445 HNE, tested to 22.2.91. Exterior colour white with blue stripes – signwriting etc is vinyl and after removal will leave plain white body. Interior brown striped moquette. Fitted with speed limiter.

Price £30,000 + VAT

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1976 AEC EXECUTIVE. 44 seats, Plaxton Supreme, Bristol Dome, p/d, full air conditioning, one of the only two built in this country. Taxed and MoT, very smart in good condition. **1977** AEC, 57 seats, Duple Dominant II, taxed and MoT, good condition. Interested? **Tel. 0942 884844 days or 061 790 9976 eves. for prices and more details.** (22202/AEC)

1979 DOMINANT 11 Express 760, s/a, 53 seats, heated windscreen, curtains, taxed and tested to 1/3/92. Hi-line needed, hence sale. **£5,000 plus VAT. Tel. 081 845 6637.** (22314/AEC)

AEC 760 ZF Box Berkhof body, 49 Vogel recliners, soft trim, carpet floor, radio/cassette, PA, curtains, wheel trims, MoT April '92, PX 53-seater, 1984 registration. **£16,950. Oakleaf, Barnsley. Tel. 723361.** (22358/AEC)

AEC 760 PLAXTON COACH
53 reclining seats, very good condition, tested.
£2,500 + VAT
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(22356/AEC)

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S REG BEDFORD YMT Plaxton Supreme III, 53 seats, tested March '92, reliable, contract coach. **£3,250 + VAT. Tel. (0594) 563669 (Gloucester).** (22338/BE)

BEDFORD

1984 BEDFORD PLAXTON, 53 seater, good condition. **£19,995 + VAT.** For details, **tel: 081 893 2030 (Middlesex).** (22174/BE)

1983 BEDFORD PARAMOUNT 3200, 49 seats, toilet, drinks, fridge, TV/video, full exec engine and ZF gearbox, only 16 months old, in excellent condition, MoT 28/4/92. **£20,500 + VAT. Tel. (0226) 385639.** (22331/BE)

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1981 BEDFORD YMT 500 TURBO DOMINANT 11, 53 seats. **£9,000**

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All vehicles are resprayed in white

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Grant spec, 53 seaters fitted with Cummins 6 BTA engines.
Choice of 4.
2 first reg Jan 1979,
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Prices Circa £6,000/7,000 + VAT
Tel. Peter Meadows on 0827 60011
Bowens, 66 Fazeley Road, Tamworth
(22328/BE

1980 BEDFORD PJK, 29 seater, very good condition, only 205,000 km from new, all white, unlettered, 12 months MoT, must be see. **£5,995 + VAT. Crossgate Coaches. Tel. 0597 851226/ 851207.** (22330/BE)

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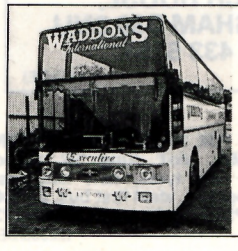
1985 BOVA FUTURA, 49 + courier, curtains, d/glazing, Webasto, sunken toilet, water boiler, wired TV, video and PA, MoT January/March 1992, will MoT if required. **Choice of two.** Identical coaches. **Bargain price £35,000 ono. Tel. 0495 303148 (work) or 308333 (home) or 303115 (home).** (22388/BO)

1988 Bova Futura, 49/53, demountable toilet, boiler, video, monitor. **£62,500 + VAT. 1984** Bova Europa, 49r, toilet, monitor, video. **£32,000 + VAT. Tel. 0932 844827 daytime, 0932 340250 night time.** (22332/BOV)

DAF

1984 DAF MB200 LAG GALAXY. 49 recliners + courier, curtains, saloon toilet, water boiler, MoT Jan '92. **£33,000 + VAT ono. Tel. (0903) 209007.** (22299/DA)



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Powered by DAF 1160 engine, rear, double-glazed, hot water, video, 49 recliners
£35,000 + VAT
Part Exchange considered, finance possible
Tel. (0222) 884648/9
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Private plate, 74 seats, rebuilt 1991, very good condition, 160,000 km, MoT, kitchen, toilet, Blaupunkt radio and PA system.
£95,000 + VAT
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1987 DUPLE 425, 59 seats, Telma, radio, PA, immaculate condition, exterior white, MoT April 1992. **£45,000 + VAT ono. Tel. Great Missenden (02406) 4346 (Bucks).** (22296/DU)

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1983 PP DAF

2300 Jonckheere P599, 68 seater + courier, 4 TVs, video, radio/PA, coffee boiler, tinted windows, toilet, fully carpeted, curtains.
Make me an offer
Part exchange is most welcome
Tel: 061 480 0617 or 0831 267566
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DOUBLE DECKER
DAF JONCKHEERE P99

71 seats, 1984, Apri '92 MoT and retrimmed. All usual extras. Recent engine.
VICTORY TOURS
Salisbury, Wiltshire
(0725) 552247
(22360/DAF)

1979 (V) DAF, MB200 Plaxton, 57 seats, clean and tidy. **£7,500 ono. Tel. Blythswood Motors on 041 221 3165.** (22377/DAF)

1986 DUPLE DAF MB230, 53-seater, curtains, side lockers, toilet, TV, video, reclining seats, many more extras, MoT Aug '91. **£45,000 + VAT. Tel. (0924) 474830 or (0860) 222950.** (22301/DA)

1984 DAF JONCKHEERE, DAF 49-seater, curtains, reclining seats, toilet, video, TV, side lockers, MoT Feb '91. **£36,000 + VAT. Tel. (0924) 474830 or (0860) 222950.** (22300/DA)

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FORD 31/35 SEATER

Tables, twin micros, PA, tape deck, full-draw curtains, MoT and taxed, finished in two pack paint.
£9,000 + VAT
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1980 FORD DOMINANT II, 53 seats – retrimmed, Bristol Dome, side lockers, twin tanks, POD radio/PA, new MoT. **£6,950 + VAT.**
1979 FORD PLAXTON SUPREME, engine overhauled, October 1991, POD, MoT May 1992. **£5,250 + VAT.**
1972 VICEROY, MoT December 1991, excellent example of this model. **£2,000 + VAT.**
All the above vehicles are maintained to the highest standards. They are all FTA Inspected. One of the above must go to make way for new vehicle.
Tel: 061 223 3103 day or 061 257 3358 eve
(22200/FO)

1981 FORD PLAXTON

53 seats, Telma, lockers, radio, PA, cassette, tinted, test 4/92, two owners from new, unlettered, good condition.
£7,800 + VAT ono
Bugler Bristol
(0272) 778759 days
(0272) 779170 eves/wkend
(22313/FO)

1980 Ford Plaxton, 53 seater, private plate. **£5,000 + VAT. Tel. 0932 844827 daytime, 0932 340250 night time.** (22334/FO)

1976 PLAXTON SUPREME II, 53-seater, power door, new engine, new clutch, new MoT, very good condition for year. **£3.500 + VAT. Please tel. (0205) 354804.** (22336/FO)

1981 FORD DOMINANT II, 53-seater, MoT Nov '92, taxed, good, clean condition inside and out, owner-driver, well maintained. **£6,000 + VAT. Tel. (0702) 430786 (Essex).** (22340/FO)

1976 FORD DUPLE. Short MoT, 49 seats. **£999 ono + VAT. Tel. 021 555 6262.** (10707/FO)

1976 FORD, 53 seats, Duple Dominant I, power door, will have new test. For price and details, **tel: 0942 884844 days or 061 790 9976 eves.** (22201/FO)

LEYLAND

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LEYLAND LEOPARD
V reg, 49 seater, Dominant II, grand doors, destination equipment, taxed and tested, ready to go.
Bargain at £5,000 + VAT
PSV PRODUCTS
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Three Leyland Leopard Coaches
SND 84X Duple, 51 seater, tested to January, **£9,675.**
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MNC 501W 12 metre with stick box and Duple 50 seater body, tested to December, **£8,775.**
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(22309/LE)

1965 LEYLAND LEOPARD

51 seats.
First to see will buy.
£2,500 + VAT
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1985 TIGER 24S CARIBBEAN 11, 48 recliners plus courier, rear sunken toilet, d/glazed, Webasto, radio/pa, video, speed limiter, in pristine condition. **£29,500 + VAT. Tel. 0623 870655/ 871577 any trial.** (10713/LE)

REBODIED LEYLAND LEOPARD to PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 2300. 53 seater in November 1984. COF April 1992, air door, radio etc, beautiful condition, surplus to requirement, reg number AEH 227A. Only **£17,000 + VAT. 1987** LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE 320 EXEC, 50 r/seats, new TV, new video, new toilet, recon fridge, private plate, COF January 1992. Only **£44,000 + VAT. Tel. 0371 872644.** (22231/LE)

1973 DOUBLE DECKER, 76-seater, Alexander body, MoT May '92, good condition, **£2,500. Tel. Holloways, Scunthorpe (0724) 281177.** (22277/LE)

1978 LEYLAND 680 DUPLE EXPRESS, 47 semi coach seats, excellent order, new test, choice of three. **£5,500 ono. Tel. Blythswood Motors on 041 221 3165.** (22374/LE)

LEYLAND NATIONALS, all tested, in daily use, choice of 10, 52-seater with standees. Prices from **£3,000 each + VAT. Tel. (0484) 545241.** (22335/LE)

LEYLAND

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53 seats + courier, semi-auto, tinted windows, new boot, power door.
£11,500 ono + VAT
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48 E-type recliner, toilet, semi-auto, tinted windows, power door, drinks machine.
£19,000 ono + VAT
1981 PP LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE DOMINANT IV
48 E-type recliners, toilet, hydracyclic, tinted double glazed windows, power door, drinks machine.
£23,500 ono + VAT
1982 PP LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE DOMINANT III GOLDLINER
46 recliners, toilet, ZF, tinted double glazed windows, recent boot, power door, full soft trim.
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Also 8 various Leyland Atlantean (AN 68) M-P Reg.
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1983 LEYLAND TIGER
245 H.Y.D. Duple Lazer, 48 recliners & courier, toilet, servery, MoT 25/3/92.
£21,750 ono may p/x
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(22092/LE)

MAN VW

1986 MAN BERKHOF, 49 seats, full Executive, TV, toilet, long test, clean machine. **£49,000 ono. Tel. Blythswood Motors on 041 221 3165.**
(22375/MAN)

MERCEDES

MERCEDES 407D MAY 88
15 seats on sliding rails for easy removal, very good condition, MoT May '92, one owner.
£9,000 + VAT

MERCEDES 609D SEPT 88
21 seats, arm rests, curtains, large boot etc, very good condition, MoT Aug '92, one owner.
£14,000 + VAT
or both for £22,000 + VAT
Tel. 031-339 6339 (Edinburgh)
(22303/ME)

MERCEDES 811D AUTO
32 seat, 1989 G, Mellor Coachcraft body, lowback vinyl seats (24 removable), Henderson hideaway taillift, 60,000 kms, CIF certificate.
£POA
Tel. 061 230 6808 North Manchester Commercials
(22349/ME)

MERCEDES 608D 1985 (B)
21-seater, Reeves Burgess conversion, test till 11/10/92, repainted in white, unlettered. First-class condition.
£11,000 + VAT
Tel. (0977) 615763
(22295/ME)

MCW

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MCW METRORIDER
25 coach seats, Cummins 6B, ZF 5-speed, 1 owner.
£18,500 + VAT
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0480 860581
(22365/MCW)

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NEOPLAN N907, MAN engine, 23 seats, full air suspension, double-glazed, curtains, recliners, hot water boiler, Webasto, radio/tape/PA, boot plus underfloor luggage space, taxed plus new test. **£16,500 + VAT. Tel. (0200) 445210.**
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STRATHMARTINE COACHES
DUNDEE

1985 FIAT BEJA, 18 seats, power door, Eberspacher, parcel racks, curtains, passageway carpet, PA system, MoT Oct '92.....**£10,500 plus VAT**

1988 IVECO VIANA GL, 19 seats, power door, Eberspacher, TV, video, coffee machine, parcel racks, curtains, passageway carpet, PA system, MoT Feb '92.....**£16,000 plus VAT**

1989 OPTIMO, 6 cyl, 18 reclining seats plus courier seat, power door, TV, video, fridge, coffee machine, curtains, passageway carpet, large boot, heavy duty battery and alternator etc, MoT March '92.....**£26,000 plus VAT**

All coaches red/white exterior
All in immaculate condition
Phone
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(22321/MC)

SCANIA

EXAMPLE

SCANIA K93 AUTO JULY 1989 (F)
49 recliners plus courier, Plaxton 3200, video, TV, drinks, toilet, radio/PA, centre carpets, white exterior, grey interior, 128,000kms, new tyres, 11 months MoT.
£78,000 + VAT.
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(22371/SC/PIC/CH)

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LEYLAND NATIONALS, 1978/9, 36 seats, dual doors, excellent condition, currently in everyday service, long test. **£3,500 + VAT. Also** always wanted Bristol REs, any condition. **Tel. 061-343 3517.**
(22337/SD)

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OPTARE CITYPACER, 25 seats, D reg, MoT 1/11/91, tinted windows, stereo, Eberspacher, power door, turbo tacho, 5 speed, ideal private hire/local services. **£11,000. Tel. 0860 561515.**
(22378/OPT)

SETRA

SETRA DECKER, S228 DT, 1986, 75 recliners, full spec, immaculate condition, new engine just fitted with warranty. **£85,000 + VAT. Tel. 0423 883203.**
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Serious orders now being considered for 1992. Do call and view our superb range of vehicles. Compare prices and you will be amazed just how competitive our vehicles are. Drive into 1992, as many other enlightened mainland operators do, with SETRA.

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1981 **Bristol LHS** 33 seat coach. In above-average condition. £18,250 + VAT

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We have a limited number of new vehicles in stock too!

Please note: Year of registration does not necessarily denote year of manufacture.

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VOLVO

1986 VOLVO B10M GL

VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH

49 recliners, video/TV, toilet, servery, etc.

£52,500 + VAT

Telephone: 0642 227716

(22380/VO)

1983 VOLVO B10M DUPLE LASER I

51 reclining seats, 6-speed, exterior white/purple stripe, interior red moquette, PA stereo, wheel trims, power door, Webasto, tinted windows, air suspension, side lockers, speed limiter, new MoT.

£33,250 + VAT

Tel. Mr G Walker, Walkers of Cheshire (0606) 76666

(22297/VO)

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Durham City

One of the following exec vehicles must be sold

1984 VOLVO Van Hool Alizee, SH.

1987 VOLVO Van Hool Alizee, DH.

1989 VOLVO Van Hool Alizee.

All to the highest spec – 49/53 seats, very low mileage, maintained regardless of cost, and unmarked, immaculate condition.

Price on application.

Superb quality vehicles for 1992

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(22387/VO)

1983 B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 (choice of two)

50 reclining seats + courier, Telma, double-glazed, pa/radio/tape, full service history from new, new MoT certificates.

Telephone Epsom Coaches – Epsom (0372) 725252

(22291/VO)

1981 PP VOLVO

B58 Viewmaster, 28 reclining seats, toilet, two TVs and video, 6 tables with lamps, full kitchen which includes fridge, servery bar, sink, coffee machine, tinted windows, air door, curtains, fully carpeted, a truly magnificent vehicle.

Make me an offer

Part exchange is most welcome

Tel: 061 480 0617 or 0831 267566

(22384/VO)

1980 IRIZAR VOLVO B58

Air over leaf, 48 luxury, 8 position recliners, video, TV, radio cassette, PA, toilet, bunk. Tea/coffee, cool box, tinted windows, curtains, offside continental door. Serviced monthly by Volvos. MoT April '92. Taxed August '92.

View November 2nd or 3rd then from November 19th onwards

£20,000 + VAT

Tel. (0524) 51312 (North Lancs)

(22329/VO)

SPECIAL OFFER

1984 VOLVO B10M DUPLE CARIBBEAN, 49 seater, toilet fitted

1982 VOLVO B10 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, 49 seater, toilet and TV fitted

1982 VOLVO B10 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, 49 seater, toilet fitted.

Available for immediate inspection in Cambridgeshire.

For further details contact

MATTHEW DEW PHENNICUS LTD

Tel. 0480 891642 or 0836 215379 eves

(22339/VO)

DUE TO FLEET UPDATE 2 Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee, 49/53 recliners + courier, demountable, centre sunken toilet, coffee machine, wired for TV/video, bunk, private plate. **1983, MoT March '92. £39,500 + VAT. 1984, MoT Oct '92, £43,000 + VAT. Barratts Coaches. Tel. (0270) 625096.** (22279/VO)

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BEDFORD SBG Duple 41 seat vintage coach, MoT '92, recently retrimmed and refurbished, oiro **£5,000 + VAT. Tel. (0489) 892942 (Hants).** (22082/VV)

MINIBUSES

1986 MERCEDES 307 D

12 seater, exterior white, high roof, tacho, new king pins, drums and discs, etc., MoT 3/4/92, v.g.c.

£6,000 ono

Tel. 061 789 3369/2147

(22366/MB)

1987 (E) TALBOT EXPRESS, LWB Diesel, 12/14 seats, high roof, 58,000 genuine miles, MoT July '92, excellent condition, **£5,750 ono + VAT. Tel. (0437) 710337 (South Wales).** (22239/MB)

1981 MERCEDES 508D, 21 retrimmed seats, all white, good condition, MoT September 1992. **£5,000 + VAT. Tel. 081 573 1100.** (22343/MB)

MINIBUSES

WESTERN COMMERCIAL

NEW STOCK

811 TURBO MERCEDES. PMT AMI front or Mercedes front, 33 seat, wide body, coachbuilt with power glider door, large boot, full width coach seats, high spec + standees. Stock.

811 TURBO MERCEDES. PMT, 27 seats, wide body, full width coach seats, as above.

709 MERCEDES. PMT. 25 full width coach seats, power door glider, large boot + standees. Stock.

709 MERCEDES ALEXANDER, 25 seats, bus spec, electric door, standees or dual pupose seats available, stock.

609 MERCEDES VAN CONVERSION, 24 seats, electric door, luxury, 4 weeks.

410D MERCEDES, 16 seat, full luxury, stock.

308 MERCEDES, 12 seat, luxury.

USED

1987 MERCEDES 608, 26 seats.

1986 MERCEDES, 12 seater.

1986 MERCEDES, 21 Vogel seats.

1984 MERCEDES, 21 seater, new MoT.

STAGE CARRIAGE DUAL PURPOSE

1988 709D MERCEDES ALEXANDER, 25 seats, electric door, + standees.

(17834/MB)

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HAVE YOU LOST A BUS DUE TO ACCIDENT DAMAGE, MECHANICAL PROBLEMS OR JUST TOO MUCH WORK? DON'T LOSE BUSINESS – LET US HELP WITH SHORT TERM VEHICLE HIRE!!

SERVICE BUS OR COACH SPECIFICATION

Freight Rovers or Mercedes Benz – 507 – 609 – 709 up to 26 seats plus courier.

Delivery & Collection can be arranged.

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Sherpa LWB, 2.5 diesel, 20 + 2 standing, moquette seats, electric entrance doors, MoT June 1992, taxed.

£4,250 + VAT

Choice of 12, 16, 18, 20, 25 and 29 seaters available.

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(21804/MB)

1986 IVECO, 49/10, 21 seat bus + standees, power door, good condition throughout, **£8,950 + VAT. 1986 FORD TRANSIT** Diesel, 16 high back seats, power door, MoT July '92, **£4,950 + VAT. Tel. (0249) 782401.** (22229/MB)

1986 RENAULT (DODGE) MINIBUS, Northern Counties body, 18 moquette seats + 9 standing, electric door, Perkins 6-cylinder auto box, PSV tested Oct '92, good condition inside and out. **£5,250 + VAT. Tel. (0422) 375893 anytime.** (22320/MB)

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M-2-M

NEW 24 SEAT MIDICOACH

Based on Mercedes 609D with power steering, standard specification. 24 high back Capri seats by Kustombuilt trimmed in moquette and set on racking. Soft trim interior colour coded to seats, large Dropwell boot, coach back end and off-side emergency exit. Full length luggage racks with driver's locker, lift up roof vent, air intake/extract unit, saloon heater, Blaupunkt stereo radio/cassette, dim/bright interior lighting, bronze tinted windows, decorative curtains, moulded side skirts and front spoiler bolt-on wheel trims, C.I.F. and 12 months road tax.

ON THE ROAD £27,500 + VAT

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16-seater Executive minibus, black tinted windows, TV, video, PA, stereo, courier seat, telephone, spotlight, reading lamps, new MoT test, taxed.

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MERCEDES 609D

E Reg, 24 seats, blue/grey moquette, luggage racks, boot.

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Deansgate, 12 seater, inc heater, roof vent, skirts, marker lights. Radio cassette, exterior plain white, interior blue/grey, MoT 11/92.

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14 side-facing seats, good condition, serviced by us from new, COF July 1992.

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Reeves Burgess 21-seater, VGC, engine recent overhaul, 10 months ticket, possible to alter to 25 or 27 seats.

Open to offers

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1986 FORD TRANSIT SWB, new shape, 11 seater, good condition, COF 1992. **£3,000 + VAT. Tel. 091 265 6747.**

(22260/MB)

1988 TOYOTA OPTIMO, 19 seats, only 61,000 miles, 4 cylinder, like new inside and out. **£19,000 ono. Tel. Blythswood Motors on 041 221 3165.**

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WANTED, 21 or 25-seater Mercedes 811 or Optimo. Coach seats, power door, boot, good condition. £20,000 available. All replies answered (private buyer). Reply to: **Box No 22324, Coachmart Classified, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS.** (22324/MB)

UNCLASSIFIED

1982 FORD R1114 PLAXTON SUPREME V, 53 seats, tinted windows, curtains, radio/PA, good interior, reasonable exterior, ideal contract vehicle.

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(22353/UN)

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GOOD QUALITY VEHICLES WANTED

1983 VOLVO B10M Paramount 3500, 4 star spec, 49 recliners, Exec, tested till Feb '92 ..... **£39,950 ono**

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FULL INSPECTION FACILITIES PART EXCHANGE WELCOME DISCOUNT WITH NO PART EXCHANGE

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What a refreshing atmosphere there was at the recent Bus & Coach Exhibition at the NEC. Lots to see especially all the new models available for 1992. However, what about the prices? Super machines but they seem to be into "MEGGA BUCKS"!!! We are always pleased to quote you for your new coach for next year but, what we ask of you is to consider our ever changing list of pre-owned luxury coaches that are available now at prices that need not make you cringe. If we've made you think that's good, if you give us a try that's even better. Telephone today and see!!!

1989 LAG PANORAMIC, 49 reclining seats, toilet, drinks machine, double glazing, fridge, carpet plus much more. A very low mileage machine.

1988 VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee, 49/53 recliners, double glazing, toilet, driver's sleeper plus lots more.

1988 VOLVO B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49 recliners, toilet, drinks machine, nice and clean and available now.

1986 LAG PANORAMIC, 49 recliners, toilet and servery, continental door, finished in white, including refrigerated air conditioning, brand new MoT.

1986 VOLVO B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 53 recliners, double glazing, courier seat. Absolutely mint available from stock.

1986 MERCEDES 608D, 23 luxury coach seats, new MoT.

1986 NEOPLAN/PLAXTON 4000 Double Decker, 71 recliners, toilet, servery. If you're looking for a decker bargain, look no further.

1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245, Duple Caribbean II, 51/53 recliners, sunken rear demountable toilet, continental door, double glazing, curtains, driver's bunk and lots more. There is a choice of four all identical in specification and in immaculate condition.

1985 (OCT) LEYLAND TIGER 260 Van Hool Alizee, 49 recliners, courier seat, toilet, servery. Lease available on this machine.

1985 DAF MB230 Duple Caribbean II, 49 recliners, toilet and servery. You will not find a better machine at this price!

1984 (DEC) LEYLAND TIGER 245 Duple Laser II, 57 seater, would you believe this coach is just one owner from new. Best offer that's sensible. It is a bargain.

1984 VOLVO B10M Berkhof, 53 recliners and courier seat, MoT to December. We can re-MoT if you are interested.

1983 VAN HOOL Astron Twin Decker, 60 recliners and courier, servery, toilet etc. Not many of this model around and this one is worth looking at. Long MoT.

1983 BEDFORD YMT Duple Dominant Service Bus, a proper service bus that carries over 60 people. Long MoT.

1981 VOLVO B58 Duple Dominant, 53 recliners. If you truly want to buy a machine that's in excellent condition for the year, be advised to come and look at this one.

1981 (OCT) LEYLAND LEOPARD 12 Metre Duple Dominant, 53 recliners and courier seat, recent engine and long MoT.

1979 AEC 760 Duple Dominant, 53 seater, express entrance doors, choice of 16. Some with Plaxton bodies. These are ideal for schools and works contracts. All have good MoT's.

1978 LEYLAND LEOPARD Plaxton Supreme 12 Metre, 57 seater. Best offer will secure, long MoT.

1976 AEC 760 11 Metre Plaxton, 53 seater. Best offer. Long MoT.

1974 AEC 750 12 Metre Plaxton, 57 seater. New MoT, drive away bargain.

If you cannot see what you are looking for in this list, still give us a call, we will find it for you! We are near to all the major motorways and easy to find. Do come and see us.

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(22344/UN)

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1175 ARGYLE STREET, GLASGOW

All Mercedes 2 years warranty or 200,000 kilometres

NEW MERCEDES 709D, coachbuilt, 29 + 10 Dip Tac standees, power service door, 7 days.

NEW MERCEDES 814D Coachbuilt, 33 luxury, armrest, boot racks, power door. 3 weeks.

NEW MERCEDES 811D, Coach Built 33 service, wide ent, p/door, 12 standees, 2 weeks.

NEW MERCEDES 609D, 24 seats, full spec, boot, power door, lug rack, radio cassette. Also 24 manual plus door in stock

NEW MERCEDES 410 and 408D, 16 high back face forward seats. Stock.

SHOW MODEL MERCEDES 410, 16 spec seats, curtains, special finish, stock.

NEW TALBOT TRI AXLE, 22 + 7 standees, PSV, power door, service, moquette seats. Dip tack. stock.

NEW MERCEDES 814D, coach built, 33 luxury, power swivel door, large boot, 3 weeks.
NEW MERCEDES 811 service bus, 33 + 12 standees, 2 weeks.
NEW MERCEDES 709, manual, 29 + 10 standees, 7 days.
NEW MERCEDES 609D, 24 seats, large boot, stock.
NEW MERCEDES 609D, 24 c/seats, p/door, stock.
NEW TRANSIT 16, Hi-roof, diesel, coach seats, stock.
NEW TRANSIT 16, diesel, 5-speed, s/door. Stock.
NEW TRANSIT, 15 seats, 5-speed, diesel & petrol, stock.
NEW TRANSIT 15, diesel, automatic, early.
NEW TRANSIT 16, diesel, sliding door, coach seats, high roof, coachbuilt, stock.
NEW DAF 400, 16 coach spec, u/floor taillift fitted and certified PSV, 2 weeks.
NEW DAF 400, diesel, 16 PSV, hi spec, stock.
NEW TALBOT 14, wheelchair ramp, diesel.
NEW TALBOT High roof, 14, luxury, stock.
NEW TALBOT 12+ driver, diesel PSV, stock.
NEW MERCEDES 609 24, UF, tail lift, stock.
NEW MERCEDES 410, 16 seats, luxury, stock.
NEW MERCEDES 408 Luxury, 16, stock.
NEW MERCEDES 308, Luxury, 12, 7 days.

ALL OPEN TO REASONABLE OFFERS

91 TRANSIT 20, power steering, air suspension, power door.
90 TRANSIT 16, high roof, PSV.
89 G TRANSIT, 15, PSV, diesel, low mil.
89 MERC 609, 24 + tables, no boot, low mil.
89 G TRANSIT, diesel 14, PSV, side door, tested.
89 G TRANSIT, 15 diesel, SLD, tested, high seats.
89 G LEYLAND (TALBOT), 16 PSV, testing.
89 F ROVER 12 petrol, SWB.
89 TRANSIT, 12, SWB, diesel, PSV.
88 TOYOTA OPTIMO, 19 seats.
88 (F) MERCEDES 609D, p/door, 26 coach seats.
87 IVECO 18 seat, power door.
87 TRANSIT 12, Di, LWB, PSV tested.
87 TALBOT 12, diesel, 5 speed.
87 (D) FREIGHT ROVER, Deansgate, 16 diesel.
87 TRANSIT Petrol, 12, PSV, SWB.
87 E MERCEDES 609, 26 seats, tested.
86 MAN BERKHOF Exec, 49, toilet, TV.

86 PLAXTON 4000, 71 seats, DD Gardner, ZF auto.

86 MERCEDES 608D, 21 luxury, new test.
86 OPTARE CUB, auto, 33 p/door & standees, 8.
86 (E) IVECO CAETANO, 24 air door, dual purpose
85 TALBOT, 12, PSV, petrol.
85 TRANSIT 16 Di coach seats, testing.
85 LEYLAND DOYEN, full spec executive.
83 DODGE R BURGESS, diesel, auto, 17 F door.
82 VOLVO B10 GOLDLINER, large windows, recliners, testing.
82 TRANSIT, 12 LWB, PSV, petrol, O/D. £1,000.
82 TRANSIT, 12 diesel, PSV, LWB, tested.
82 Y DAF Jonckheere 2300, Exec, toilet.
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81 LEYLAND PLAXTON Express, 51 seats.
80 LEYLAND WILLOWBROOK, Express, 49 seats, S/A, new test.

80 LEYLAND NATIONAL, 680 Bendi Bus, low mil, exhibition vehicle, offers.

80 V FORD PLAXTON, 45 seats, Turbo, tested.
79 VOLVO SUPREME V, ZF, requires test, offers.
79 FORD TURBO Duple II, 35 seats, tested.
79 V DAF PLAXTON 200, ZF, 57 seats.
79 FORD 53 Plaxton, testing. Offers.
78 DUPLE LEYLAND Express, 49 coach seats.
78 LEYLAND DUPLE Express, 49 ch seats, S/A.
77/78 NATIONALS, long and SWB, tested, offers.
76 FORD PLAXTON, 53 seats. Offers.
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76 LEYLAND PLAXTON, 50 seat coach, tested.
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75 VOLVO PLAXTON, 57, new front, ZF.
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1988 E LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200, manual, 55 seats, all white, low mileage..... **£45,000**

1987 E (DEC) LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200, manual, 57 seats, all white, low mileage. **£45,000**

1987 D LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE 320, manual, 53 seats, all white, low mileage. **£34,000**

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1988 (E) MERCEDES 609 SOLD s Burgess, 20 bus seats, standees, power door, I gear, MoT April '92.

1986 (D) FREIGHT ROVER, 16 seats, 5 standees, p/door, MoT July '92.

1986 (C) FORD TRANSIT, 16 seater, luxury mini coach, MoT March 1992.

1984 DAF JONCKHEERE, 49 seats, toilet, TV, video, MoT March 1992.

1984 (A) MAN SR280, 53 reclining seats, rear continental door, radio, PA, all white, MoT Jan '92.

1982 (X) LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON SUPREME V, 57 seats, ZF manual, express doors, double glazed, MoT Feb '92. Choice of two.

1982 (X) LEYLAND TIGER CUB, DUPLE DOMINANT bus body, 31 seats, 8 standees, Allison automatic, MoT Feb'92.

1980 BEDFORD YLQ DUPLE DOMINANT II, 45 seats, power door, MoT March '92.

1980 (V) LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME IV, 49 seats, semi auto, destination gear, express doors, choice of two, MoT April 1992.

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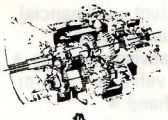
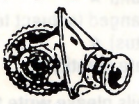

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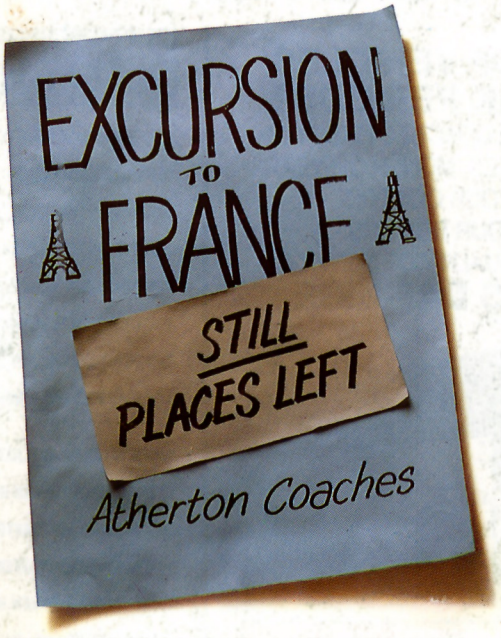

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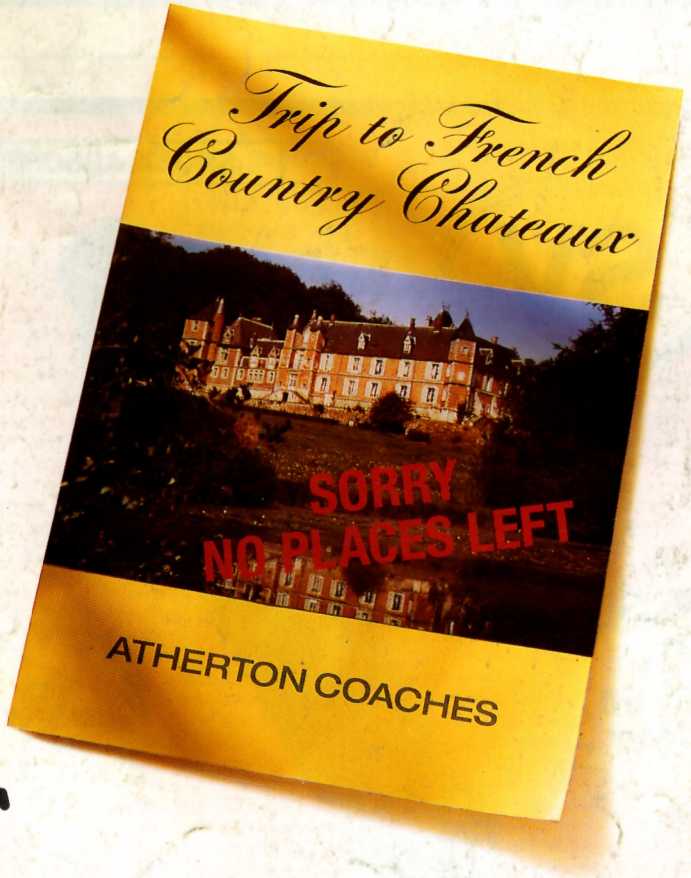

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